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FAMINES IN MNEMOHISTORY AND NATIONAL NARRATIVES IN FINLAND AND IRELAND, C. 1850-1970

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses famines and their afterlives in national contexts. The major famines in Ireland and Finland from 1845-52 and in the late 1860s, respectively, are used as case studies, to explore how issues of famine, memory, and history take symbolic and narrative shape. The chronology encompasses the mnemohistorical period for each famine, i.e. the period of coexistence between those who can remember an event and those who were born after it, and therefore cannot remember it. In other words, this period of about approximately one hundred years for each country incorporates the perspectives of both memory and history.

The thesis consists of three published articles, two article drafts, and an extensive introduction-discussion into the main overlapping fields of the research topic: famine studies, collective memory studies, and nationalism studies. The dissertation argues for a more clinical definition of memory, and the adoption of the analytical concept of mnemohistory in collective memory studies. Mnemohistory acknowledges that memory and historical representations of the past are in a dynamic relationship, for as long as the generation that experienced the event still lives. Over time, as the proportion of the group that can remember an event diminishes and its influence on society transforms, i.e. the mnemohistorical progression, historical representations becomes dominant. However, memory is still evoked in a metaphorical sense, even by people who cannot remember the famine themselves. This is especially the case when the famine in question is incorporated as a significant event in a national narrative. Evoking memory in this way carries a different function, a function of identity politics, in contrast to the memories of those who can remember their own experiences, for whom memory was essentially a subjective perspective embedded in their own life course.

This study is based upon insights gained from reading sources from a comparative perspective. The sources, in both Ireland and Finland, have been interpreted through a discourse analysis of national history textbooks, national academic, public, and popular historiographies of the famine, historical novels and plays, contemporary newspapers, population and trade statistics, local histories, and folklore testimonies. The benefit of studying two countries instead of just one has been that it enables the discovery of multiple new research problems that previous, and mainly nationally framed, research has either not noticed or addressed. This research setting questions the definitions of what could or should be considered as a “normal” famine story in a “normal” national narrative.

The three main findings of this study are as follows. Firstly, in order to analyse the aftermath of a famine it is vital to identify the historical context wherein the narrative is being voiced: the target audience and the different

ways in which different societal groups or generations give meaning to the past. It is neither society nor nations that remember the past, but individuals who try to make sense of it. This study has not been able to identify a common blueprint for how a major famine could be, or even should be, narrated. Every narrative possesses different aims and purposes; the promotion of ideological, national, or local identities sets the boundaries for the potential utility of how a famine may be incorporated into the narrative, if it is incorporated at all. Local commemorations may share a wider similarity, but they respond to locally identified needs for commemorative activity, which reflects politics on a local level, and may - although perhaps in only a limited sense - conform to broader national narratives, depending on the context. National narratives, like those articulated in educational textbooks, aim to indoctrinate pupils with a shared identity, and a historical famine is nothing more than a potential narrative device to fulfil that goal.

Secondly, in both countries the public and popular interest in topics concerning the famine began to be increasingly articulated publicly around twenty to fifty years after the event. It was during this period that those who could remember the famine were reduced from a majority to a minority of the population, approximately thirty years after the events; thus, in an increasingly literary society, there was an increasing need for representations of the famines in print. Hence, historical representations began to be published, with rhetorically legitimizing references to the author's memory as evidence for the narrator's authority and accuracy. This is one manifestation of the embeddedness of memory and history. However, in the Irish context the political constellation of antagonism between Ireland and Britain provided the Irish Famine with greater currency within their national narrative than was the case in the Finnish context. In the Finnish case, the famine became muted politically, especially after the Civil War in 1918, but resurfaced in local commemorative activity by the end of the mnemohistorical period. Throughout the mnemohistorical period in both countries, it was typical for narrators in public discourses to obfuscate the differences in perspective between witnesses and survivors, with the direct result of strengthening transgenerational collective identity.

Thirdly, as this is a pioneering study in terms of its scope, scale, and multitude of perspectives, it raises more questions than it can possibly answer. Essentially, it demonstrates that despite the rich source material and extensive research traditions on these famines, we know quite little about them. There remains plenty work to be done to better understand what famines are, and what kind of meaning and legacy can be attributed to them. There is no shortage of sources, in both Ireland and Finland; rather, there is more of a shortage of innovative and meaningful methods of interpretation, and of framing famines and famine research, as well as taking care to include the wide variety of perspectives embedded in famines.

Keywords: Famine, mnemohistory, national narratives, nation-building, Finland, Ireland, textbooks, historiography, commemoration, representation

TIIVISTELMÄ

Nälänhädät muistohistoriassa ja kansallisissa kertomuksissa Suomessa ja Irlannissa, noin 1850-1970.

Tämä väitöskirja on tutkimus nälänhädistä ja niiden jälkielämistä. Tutkimuksen keskeisenä analyyttisenä käsitteenä hyödynnetty *mnemohistory* (suom. muistohistoria) viittaa siihen kriisiä seuranneeseen ajanjaksoon, jona nälkävuosien jälkeiset sukupolvet elivät samaan aikaan kriisin kokeneen ja sen tapahtumat muistavan väestöryhmän kanssa. Tarkasteltavana on siten kummankin maan osalta noin sadan vuoden jakso, joka seurasi vuosina 1845-52 Irlannissa ja 1860-luvulla Suomessa koettuja nälkäkriisejä. Kyseisenä aikakautena historialliset ja henkilökohtaiset muistot vaikuttivat ja nivoutuivat toisiinsa ja kamppailivat toisinaan keskenään dominoivan ”totuudellisemman” menneisyyskertomuksen asemasta. Muistohistoriallinen progressio eli väestön uusiutuminen vaikutti siihen, minkälaisiksi diskurssit nälänhätien muistoista ja historiasta lopulta muokkautuivat, mutta se ei suoraan määrittänyt nälänhädän muistamista.

Tutkimus koostuu kolmesta vertaisarvioidusta artikkelijulkaisusta, kahdesta julkaisemattomasta artikkelikäsikirjoituksesta sekä laajasta johdanto- ja yhteenvetoluvusta. Tutkimus perustuu kauttaaltaan vertailevan näkökulman hyödyntämiseen, mutta varsinaista vertailevaa tutkimusmetodia sovelletaan ainoastaan yhdessä artikkelissa. Väitöskirjan johdantoluvussa käyn perusteellista keskustelua kolmen keskeisen kansainvälisen tutkimusalan tilasta: nälänhätätutkimuksen, kollektiivisen muistin tutkimuksen ja nationalismitutkimuksen. Kaikkia näitä tarkastellaan Suomen ja Irlannin nälänhätien ja maitten yleisen kansallisvaltion rakentumisen kautta. Esitän, että kyseisten tutkimusalojen soveltaminen Suomen ja Irlannin nälkäkriisien muistohistoriaan edellyttää muistin ja historian ymmärtämistä kertomuksellisina representaatioina ja retorisina välineinä, joiden tavoitteena on kollektiivisten identiteettien muovaaminen.

Tutkimusaineistona niin Irlannista kuin Suomesta on ollut kansallisen historian koulukirjoja, kansallista nälänhätätutkimusta, kansallisen historian yleisteoksia, historiallisia romaaneja ja näytelmiä, aikalaissanomalehtiä, väestö- ja ulkomaankauppatilastoja, paikallishistorioita ja muistitietokokoelmia. Tutkimusmetodina on käytetty diskurssianalyyttistä lähiluentaa ja historiallista kontekstualisointia. Lopputuloksena on syntynyt tutkimus, joka ottaa osaa kansainväliseen nälänhätien, kollektiivisen muistin ja nationalismin tieteellisiin keskusteluihin sekä molempien maiden kansalliseen historiankirjoitukseen.

Tutkimus osoittaa, että 1860-luvun nälkävuodet ovat olleet suomalaisen muistohistorian traditiossa jos ei vaiettu niin kuitenkin poliittisesti arkaluontoinen aihe. Osittain tämä liittyy nälkävuosien tapahtumiin itsessään,

osittain nälkävuosien jälkeisen ajan poliittisin jännitteisiin. Nälkävuosien tapahtumien osalta keskeistä oli fennomaanien pyrkimys varjella Johan Vilhelm Snellmanin poliittista mainetta, paikalliset epäoikeudenmukaisuuden kokemukset ja elintarvikkeiden ulosvienti nälkäänäkevästä maasta. Nälkävuosien jälkeisinä vuosikymmeninä jännitteitä synnyttivät työväestön järjestäytyminen, eliitin jakaantuminen ja lopulta sisällissota. Nämä kokonaisuudessaan vaikuttivat aikalaisten poliittisesti suodatettuun tulkintakehykseen maan kansallisesta historiasta. Konkreettisesti tämä näkyy siten, että kansallinen historiakertomus vältteli 1860-luvun nälkävuosien kerrontaa esimerkiksi kansakoulujen historiakirjoissa. Toisaalta taas kotimainen kaunokirjallisuus ammensi joko suorilla viittauksilla tai temaattisilla valinnoilla (yhteiskunnallinen realismi, köyhyys ja kurjuus, nälkä ja kuolema) hyvin paljon nälkävuosien kokemuskentästä - jopa niin paljon, että jos nälkävuosia ei olisi koskaan tapahtunut, olisivat monet nykyään kirjallisuuden klassikoiksi luokitellut teokset hyvin erilaisia. Kuvaavaa on, että vasta aivan muistohistoriallisen kauden lopussa, kun kaikki tapahtuman muistamaan kykenevät olivat jo kuolleet, alettiin maassa laajemmin jälkipolvien taholta pystyttää muistomerkkejä nälkävuosien paikallisesti tärkeille muistinpaikoille. Kansallista muistomerkkiä ei Suomesta löydy.

Muistohistoriallisen dynamiikan yksi tärkeimmistä taustatekijöistä on nälkävuosien muistamiseen kykenevän väestön väheneminen. Ensimmäiset muistelmat nälkävuosista ilmestyivät noin kaksi vuosikymmentä tapahtuman jälkeen, jolloin uusi nälkävuosien jälkeinen sukupolvi oli jo kasvanut aikuisiän kynnykselle. Ensimmäiset laajalevikkisimmät historialliset romaanit, näytelmät ja aiheen historiantutkimuksen pioneerit ilmestyivät 1890-luvulla, jolloin tapahtuman muistavat olivat jo alle 50 prosenttia koko väestöstä. Ensimmäiset muistitietokeräykset koottiin 1910-luvulla, kun muistamiseen kykenevä väestöryhmä oli jo 45-vuotiasta tai vanhempaa ja muodosti kokonaisväestöstä noin viidenneksen.

Irlannin osalta muistohistoriallinen tausta noudattaa karkeasti samankaltaista kehityskäyrää kuin Suomessa. Keskeinen ero on kuitenkin se, että Irlannissa kansalliset muistitietokeräykset tehtiin 1930- ja 1940-luvuilla, jolloin aineisto pääosin on toisen tai kolmannen sukupolven suullista perimää eikä siten juurikaan sisällä omakohtaisia tai silminnäkijäkokemuksia. 1800-luvun Irlannin erottaa Suomesta myös historian kulttuurinen ja yhteiskunnallinen status, joka oli poleemisempi luonteeltaan ja jonka takia sitä ei myöskään koululaitoksissa juurikaan opetettu. Maan poliittinen ja uskonnollinen konteksti suhteessa 1800-luvun emämaahaan Britanniaan oli voimakkaasti kärjistetympi kuin Suomen suhde Venäjän keisarikuntaan. Tämä elävöitti Irlannin nälänhädän maan kansallisen historiakertomuksen keskeiseksi tapahtumaksi kansallismielisissä historiakertomuksissa. Nämä kansallismieliset tulkinnat eivät kuitenkaan nousseet valtavirraksi julkisissa historiakertomuksissa kuin vasta vuosikymmenien viiveellä ja koululaitoksessa vasta noin puolivuosisataa nälänhädän jälkeen. Muistohistorian loppupuolella nälänhädän satavuotismerkkivuotena, kun

muistamaan kykenevät olivat jo poistuneet, yleistyi paikallinen muistotoiminta, aivan kuten Suomessakin. Tämä väitöskirja haastaa aikaisemman irlantilaisen historiatutkimuksen tulkinnan, jonka mukaan Irlannin nälänhätä olisi ollut historioitsijoiden unohtama ja yhteiskunnallisesti vaiettu tapahtuma. Irlannissa keskustelutiin nälänhädästä julkisuudessa vuosina 1850-1950, mutta käsityksemme historiasta, historioitsijasta ja kansallisen kertomuksen hegemoniasta ovat muuttuneet niin paljon, että keskustelua ei helposti tunnisteta historialliseksi. Tämä tekee muistohistoriasta oivallisen analyyttisen käsitteen, sillä se mahdollistaa joustavamman näkökulman tilassa ja ajassa muuttuvien historia-, muisto- ja identiteetti- käsitekategorioiden tutkimiseen.

Avainsanat: Nälkävuodet, muistohistoria, nationalismi, Suomi, Irlanti, historiallinen kulttuuri, kansalliset kertomukset, historianopetus, muistomerkit, representaatio

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When I entered university in 2005 to study history, I did not imagine that one day I would become a historian. I thought I was more interested in the present, and a history degree would only be a tool to understand it better. But, as history so often shows us, things do not always go as planned.

A few people have had a foundational role in making this dissertation possible. First, I must thank professor Henrik Meinander and University Lecturer Derek Fewster, and the other staff at Historia for believing, supporting, and guiding me as I matured and polished my intellectual skills into a research craft. Derek introduced me to the field of historical culture, and how studying history can be used in the present. When I decided that I did want to become a scholar, Henrik was the person who opened the door and gave me a chance to muddle through. Without their support during my bachelor's, master's and initial PhD years, I would not have taken the first steps that were required to become a scholar.

If Derek and Henrik gave me the confidence and opportunity to pursue a PhD, a large share of thanks also goes to Andrew Newby, who offered me an essay topic that eventually led to this PhD. He gave me the impetus to re-examine the way the Finnish famine of the 1860s had been dealt with in Finnish historiography, and suggested that by looking at another odd famine, i.e. the Irish Famine, perhaps it would be possible to understand both famines and their national historical cultures and famine representations a little better. Furthermore, Andrew has been an inspiring role model for how to do real transnational and comparative history, for introducing me to other scholars in the field, for opening the door to collaborative work, and occasionally even feeding me - so that I would not have to go hungry. Furthermore, he is the person whom I always felt most confident to rely on for advice when I felt insecure about my research project. Without Andy, this PhD would never have seen the daylight.

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In 2011, at the EUI's summer school in Florence, Professor Regius, Sir John Elliot (University of Oxford) said in the concluding remarks of his keynote speech that comparative history as a field is too ambitious a task for a PhD project. I listened to him and took it as a challenge; but I must confess that now, looking at the time consumed and the final bill, maybe, just maybe, a

somewhat less ambitious project could have been more efficiently executed. On the other hand, that would not have been as interesting as this one.

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In Espoo, December 2019

CONTENTS

Abstract 3

Tiivistelmä 5

Acknowledgements 8

Contents 11

List of original publications 14

1 Introduction 15

1.1 The comparative setting 19

1.2 Sources and methodology 23

1.3 Why study famine, mnemohistory, and nation-building in Ireland and Finland? 26

1.4 Research questions 29

1.5 Outline of this thesis 32

2 Famine as an object of study 35

2.1 How do famines impact individuals and society? 49

2.1.1 Hunger and sickness 50

2.1.2 Coping with death and bodies 55

2.1.3 Migration 62

2.1.4 Social dislocation, the break-up of family and communal ties 65

2.1.5 Impoverishment (and growth) 70

2.2 Interpretations of what politically caused the famines 72

3 Mnemohistory as an object of study 75

3.1 Why mnemohistory? 75

3.2 Conceptual disorientations: the problems with 'Collective Memory' 80

3.2.1 Why 'Cultural Memory' does not work 83

3.2.2 Oral history and oral tradition, and how they relate to mnemohistory 86

3.3 'Memory' is not an innocent metaphor 91

3.3.1 Transgenerational memory and its problems 93

3.3.2 'Cultural trauma' as manufactured identity 98

3.4 Famine experiences are too diverse for generalizations of trauma 101

4 Imagined communities as an object of study 104

4.1 The nation as an imagined intergenerational community ... 105

4.2 Nationalism and patriotism 110

4.3 Shared pasts and the construction of community 112

4.3.1 Nation-building and schooling 114

4.4 Collective 'trauma' as a manifestation of discursive identity, not famine 119

4.5 Methodological nationalism and comparative historiography 122

4.5.1 Some examples of collective narratives framing famine interpretations 125

4.5.2 Context is everything 128

5 The Irish Famine in Irish mnemohistory 131

5.1 The context 131

5.2 The position of history in Ireland 133

5.3 Points in famine historiography: state-loyalism, nationalism, and divine determinism 138

5.3.1 State-loyalism 140

5.3.2 Nationalist narrative 142

5.3.3 Divine / natural determinism 146

5.3.4 Core tenets of Irish Famine historiography in the nineteenth century 149

5.4 Famine mnemohistory in independent Ireland: literature, folklore, and historiography 154

5.5 Famine centenary commemorations and the end of mnemohistory 158

5.6 In conclusion 163

6 Epilogue: A commentary on famine memorials in Finland 164

6.1 Famine memorials in Finland 165

6.2 Historical errors or just local interpretation? 168

7 Concluding discussion 174

Sources and bibliography 185

LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

This thesis is based on the following publications:

I "Finland's famine years of the 1860s: a nineteenth-century perspective" (with Antti Häkkinen). In *Famines in European Economic History: The last great European famines reconsidered*. Curran, D., Luciuk, L. & Newby, A. G. (eds). Abingdon: Routledge 2015, 99-123.

II "Masculine Submission: National Narratives of the Last Great Famine, c. 1868-1920", *Journal of Finnish studies* (2017) 20, 1, 38-64.

III "'If they do not want to work and suffer, they must starve and die': Irish and Finnish famine historiography compared", *Scandinavian Journal of History* (2018) 43, 4, 484-514.

IV "The Study of History Textbooks and the Absence of the 1860s Great Finnish Famine in the National Narrative" Draft -version.

V "Irish schools, contemporary history and the teaching of nationality: What was 'nation' in the Irish national narratives, 1850-1905?" Draft -version.

The publications are referred to in the text by their roman numerals.

1 INTRODUCTION

How do we think about famine? How can we? Or, how should we? It is a perplexing task to employ description, explanation, narration, causation, and moral judgment to a situation that challenges the normal conventions and norms of society.[1] Famine is a word that is used to conceptually structure the modern world: a tool for othering, both in contemporary global politics and the temporal understanding of 'us' in the past.[2] Consequently, it is not an accident that representations of famine are said to be 'expressions of the inexpressible'.[3] According to the United Nations, a famine can be declared when 'certain measures of mortality, malnutrition and hunger are met. They are: at least 20 per cent of households in an area face extreme food shortages with a limited ability to cope; acute malnutrition rates exceed 30 per cent; and the death rate exceeds two persons per day per 10,000 persons'.[4] Historically, a famine is a situation in a given territory where shortage of food leads to mass-starvation within a narrowly defined time and space - as simple as that. And yet, it is not at all as simple as that. Neither the time-frame that encompasses the famine, nor the territory where the famine is located, nor the group of people suffering from it, form uncontested and neutral definitions.[5] These are political demarcations enforced by political decision makers, and sometime later reconfigured to serve political and ideological pursuits.[6] Famine and its every euphemism are never neutral.

A famine implies a shortage of food, and is thus about hunger, but a constant state of endemic malnutrition is not yet a famine, because famine is also a rupture in time.[7] However, in many cases famine and endemic malnutrition are interlinked to such an extent that a sharp demarcation between them is not always possible or meaningful. Famine also implies mass mortality, and that the major cause of death is somehow related to the lack of food. This lack of food-principle is often contradictory to official reports, which are inclined to report epidemics and only seldomly starvation as causes of death. A critical reading of such sources is vital because malnutrition weakens chances of survival from epidemics, and in addition there may be political and biased interests that want to obfuscate the causes of the mass mortality. For

[1] Edgerton-Tarpley 2008, 3.

[2] Arnold 1988, 5; De Waal 2005, 20.

[3] Kelleher 1997.

[4] UN News Center, 'When a food security crisis becomes a famine', http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39113#.WVooYYjyiUk (last visited 3.7.2017).

[5] De Waal 1990, 470-472; Sen 1981, 39-44.

[6] De Waal 2015, 1528-1529; Voutilainen 2017; Ó Gráda 2009, 12-13.

[7] Weiss 2000, 144.

instance, it does not present a priest in a favourable light, i.e. a socially responsible Christian ethic, if his flock's sudden mass mortality is ascribed to starvation, a symptom of serious inequality, while he remains evidently well fed; in contrast, famine fever or some other known epidemic provides a 'natural' or 'divine' cause of death that initially, at least, does not suggest that the priest has taxed his flock too harshly or mismanaged his duties in some other way. This same rationale can be extrapolated to any hierarchical or bureaucratic state-institution where causes of death are reported to superiors: for example, prison and workhouse wardens, who are responsible for providing their inmates with harsh but liveable conditions. In addition, leading politicians may have an interest in either downplaying or exaggerating causes of death in order to achieve some other political goals.

The effects of hunger and pestilence to weaken the body are felt biologically, and are personal, yet the word famine suggests a social phenomenon affecting a group of people, i.e., one starving person does not yet constitute a famine.[8] It is a state of failure for society, where normal social conventions and welfare mechanisms are thrown under enormous strain, and in the face of individual suffering a part of society collapses along with each collapsing individual.[9] Famine is most often preceded by a longer process of deprivation and malnutrition, but famine is triggered by some event, either natural or man-made, or a combination of these. This starts a social process of unprecedented and unusual symptoms; rising food prices, food riots, an increase in crimes against property, a significant number of actual or imminent deaths from starvation, a rise in temporary migration, and the emergence of famine-induced infectious diseases;[10] all, or even a part of, these effects may lead to higher mortality and lower birth-rates, which after the climax of the event slowly begins to normalize, depending on what specific symptoms and how broad a scope one applies to a locality. Thus, famine is both an event and a process,[11] and its outcome is heavily dependent upon structures. But famines are rarely national events, if ever. They can have a geographically wide reach, and famines as a social crisis are a regional phenomenon that devastates local communities, disrupts households, and kills individuals.[12]

The discourse on famine - which includes attempts to avoid its discussion or to frame it in a way that may marginalize it, or some aspect of it, or to collectivize it as a supposedly shared experience - is essentially a political discourse. One could say that a famine poses a challenge to the political order, and that simultaneously it is a manifestation of the political conditions at work. The politics of it begin with the increased vulnerability and dislocation

[8] Vanhaute 2011, 50.

[9] Weiss 2000, 138-139.

[10] Ó Gráda, 2009, 7; also Edgerton-Tarpley 2008, 3.

[11] Arnold 1988, 6.

[12] On a similar note see Vanhaute, Paping and Ó Gráda 2007, 34-35.

of a certain segment of the population. The politics of famine continues during the crisis and beyond, for as long as historiography and the cultural remnants of the event remain politically sensitive issues.

The process of famine may happen without any awareness by contemporaries, or perhaps only scattered awareness, and the famine may be managed by some interest groups with a shifting degree of deliberate attempts to transform society, or parts of it.[13] It is noteworthy that during the nineteenth century, due to the expansion of the printing press, public debate, and democratic ideals, the extent and development of poverty rarely went unnoticed; it is more accurate to talk about wilful neglect or a misunderstanding of the social, biological, and political forces at play than a total unawareness of the social circumstances and the extent of poverty that prevailed in different societies.[14] In the decades preceding the famines that this thesis uses as case studies - Ireland from 1845-52 and Finland in the 1860s - the extent of poverty did not go unnoticed by the public, and policy options to alleviate the situations for society as a whole and the poor themselves were openly deliberated upon. The political question was about how, who, and at what cost society should act upon poverty, and thus prevent future famines. Indeed, the different workhouse systems that were created across Europe were a social-political response to these debates. After all, this is what the early political economists, Adam Smith and David Ricardo and even Thomas Malthus, sought to make visible through their theories: how government actions could and would affect various parts of the economy, and what kind of risks it involved. The Enlightenment ideas of a society organized according to the principles of rationality, manifested as a state for the people, recognized the importance of social reform and the social responsibility of public actors. As a result, political decisions were made to counter the spread of poverty; however, while some of these decisions did alleviate poverty to some degree, others exacerbated it. It is noteworthy that policies with good intentions do not always lead to good and desired results. The public recognition of the success and failure of these decisions was also a political question, imbued with the interest of preserving a meaningful political legacy in both history and memory.[15]

A population may suffer from socio-economic disadvantages, from ineffective measures taken by a weakened state government, socio-ecological

[13] For example, Voutilainen 2017; Nally 2011.

[14] The point I want make here is that the nineteenth century radically differed from, for example, the medieval period, in that reducing poverty became an articulated goal of public policy, and that poverty was not considered in any way as a natural or God-ordained state for society. In the nineteenth century, absolute poverty was seen as a social problem that needed to be addressed. I do not subscribe to the idea that famine prevention is merely a modern twentieth century welfare state's political aim. Famine prevention has always been one of the most important justifications for social and political inequality in any community.

[15] Pakier and Stråth 2010, 7.

imbalance, or a compromised ability to combat diseases; or, as is often the case, a mixture of these. This is the structural build-up of increased vulnerability to famine.[16] The political discourse and dominant narratives preceding the famine formed the starting point to how the event unfolded and was interpreted by the different people involved. The words that were employed to describe it shaped the actions and responses.[17] Was it called 'famine', 'crop failure', or 'distress'; whom did it concern, and what were its geographical limits, and when was it proclaimed to be over, and by whom? 'Who cries famine?'[18] The semantics of famine have far-reaching implications, not only on the event as it happens, concerning who is entitled to relief and how deaths are reported, but also on how it will be remembered or forgotten, narrated and historicized afterwards, and by whom, i.e. how its 'mnemohistory' will be applied in new political circumstances. By famines' *mnemohistory,* we mean how the famines have been portrayed and interpreted after they have been declared officially over. The concept is a recognition of the differences between and interrelatedness of memory and history, and the multitude of perspectives that the past has left in its trail.

The focus of this study is national representations of the Irish famine of 1845-52 and the Finnish famine of 1866-68, and the comparative value these cases provide to situating famines in mnemohistory, or more broadly in collective memory studies. By mnemohistory, we mean the approximately hundred years aftermath of the event. During the famine period, the actions taken by the government and private individuals alike, and the experiences lived through, came to play a significant part in how the famines were later to be remembered by those who outlived the crisis. For nineteenth century famines, as with any contemporary crisis, the distinction between the politicization of an event, the academic political analysis of an event, and the historicization of an event are fluid. Indeed, the first famine historians were politicians by profession; the professional famine historians made politics through their historiography, and the 'plural memories' or 'memorial traditions'[19] from the famine period contributed to the cultural legacy of the famine, which in effect reflected and shaped public discussion and perceptions, and contributed to the degree of salience attached to the famine in identity discourses. This means that we cannot clearly delineate separate analytical categories for memory, politics, history, and identity pertaining to these events. As a starting point, we need to acknowledge that these aspects are in a dynamic and interdependent relationship with each other. I propose mnemohistory as the most suitable category of analysis through which we can begin to disentangle this cacophony of perspectives. This thesis, and the

[16] On a similar note see Weiss 2007, 461-462; Watts and Bohle 1993; Bankoff 2004; Deng 2007; Davis 2002: Devereux 2007.

[17] Howe and Devereux 2007, 28.

[18] De Waal 2005, 29-32.

[19] Gray 2004b, 47.

articles that this thesis is based upon, scrutinize some aspects of that dynamism and interdependence.

1.1 THE COMPARATIVE SETTING

Even though this study focuses on two countries, it is not an exercise in comparative history. However, it occasionally utilizes the comparative method, as understood by Marc Bloch, i.e. to study transnational phenomena such as famine, mnemohistory, and national narratives. The comparative method is useful when we try to solve general problems, and to understand which attributes are universal and which are distinctively contextual.[20] This is explicitly done in article III, where the comparative perspective presents a similar event that resulted in different historiographical emphases in interpretation, and it is occasionally used in the theoretical sections of this thesis. In article III, it resulted in a new set of research questions for future research to address. Still, it would be wrong to characterize this thesis in its entirety as a comparative history. Four out of five articles have their focus on one case within one country. If we regard comparative history to mean primarily nation state comparison, then in that regard this thesis would not deliver enough comparisons to be worth the definition. Moreover, the individual articles study particular developments in these nations' mnemohistories, but the overarching aim as discussed in this introductory summary is to integrate them into a broader discussion of famines in mnemohistory and national narratives that could potentially apply beyond these individual cases.

If one connective label is sought for this study, a better candidate would be that of the comparative perspective, where the insights gained from one unit empower the scholar to critically revaluate explanations in the other unit or units. Thus, the comparative perspective often raises more new questions, while the comparative method can potentially be used to test a hypothesis regarding a phenomenon in a social system. The comparative method is useful when trying to solve a particular problem. For example, to distinguish if a certain social phenomenon is a local 'pseudo-cause' or if it is part of a more universal pattern.[21]

Neither are the articles in this study pure transnational history, excepting that I view many historical developments that often have been treated in national isolation as transnational or universal phenomena. For example, national school systems, nation building, the development of historiography, the expansion of print capitalism, plot structures, the analysis of specific historic events, or social welfare policies are often viewed through the perspective of insular or isolationist methodological nationalism. In my view,

[20] Sewell 1967.

[21] Sewell 1967, 210.

they manifest a universal recipe with local ingredients. Many structural developments have a transnational outlook, e.g. workhouse schemes or poor relief in general, agricultural development, or commemorational practices, but that does not automatically mean that such countries share a similar sense of entangled history, or a history of transfer, that neighbouring countries more often do. In other words, I am not concerned with such questions as, did the Irish American emigrant communities' remembrance of famine and oppression spill-over to other emigrant communities, such as Finns in America?[22]

However, this thesis can be regarded as transnational in the sense that mnemohistory, famines, and nationalism as targets for academic inquiry are transnational, unless they are specifically defined as a specific community's mnemohistory or a regional famine. They are as transnational topics as any kind of scientific inquiry, such as mathematics, linguistics, or biology. In chapters two, three, and four I explore the abovementioned concepts as universal matters, but mostly derive my arguments and examples from these two specific cases; in other words, I utilize a comparative perspective.

A typical point of critique against comparative studies is the validity of the units of comparison. However, this must always be solved according to the research problem.[23] If we want to understand what legacy the nineteenth century major famines left European societies to cope with, there are not many better options than Ireland's and Finland's major famines. Other European famines could be added to the inquiry, but in terms of catastrophic scope and available sources of information, these famines provide an excellent starting point. The question does not require that they would be more entangled and affect each other's development. If we change the question to include Asia or Africa, or include twentieth century famines, then the units of comparison should change accordingly. In defence of the selection of this period and this deliberate eurocentrism, it can definitely be stated that these famines were an anomaly in their time, and even in European history, and thus they require special attention. Yet the narratives of the famines contain tropes that should not be considered as European, but universal.[24] They are also interesting from the point of view that both countries possess a number of broad historical similarities, at least on a superficial level: imperial and colonial geopolitical entanglements and discourses, nation building within an empire, major famines, simultaneous independence (roughly), Civil War, privileged minorities associated with former colonial regimes, etc. For this reason, some scholars have previously sought to make a comparative analysis between Ireland and Finland.

Sociologist Stein Rokkan was probably one of the earliest scholars to focus on small nation-state comparisons, including the similarities of Ireland and

[22] This interesting topic has been dealt with by Andrew Newby. E.g. Newby 2014.

[23] Sewell 1967, 211-214

[24] E.g. Edgerton-Tarpley 2008.

Finland.[25] Interestingly, he also remarked on a difference, that 'there was no Finnish equivalent to the Irish Famine, and there was very little overseas emigration to slow down the growth of the rural proletariat before the onset of mass politics'.[26] This quote manifest many of the problems often associated with comparative history.

First, this type of historical sociology with cross country comparisons is sometimes criticized for perpetuating a national identity discourse instead of deconstructing it.[27] Secondly, making a comparison always runs the risk of generalization, simplification, and blunt mistakes by overlooking contextual details. Rokkan's assertion is a case-in-point. It includes two outright errors and one relatively debatable remark. However, in his defence for omitting the Finnish famine, partial blame could be directed towards Finnish scholars, who had produced virtually no publications on the topic for an international readership by the end of the 1960s. Studies in Finnish and Swedish did exist, but for a foreigner it would have been understandably difficult to access them. With regards to the claim of the onset of mass politics, Irish history could be used to prove the opposite of what Rokkan claims. Irish mass politics (Daniel O'Connell's national mass mobilizations in the 1830s and 1840s) began before emigration started to curb the growth of a rural proletariat, i.e. after the Irish Famine. The argument that Finnish overseas emigration, in total c. 300 000 over the years 1870 to 1914,[28] should be considered 'very little' out of a population of 3 million in 1912 is not something that Finnish scholars would unequivocally accept, although in comparison to Ireland the absolute numbers are small indeed and the effect on the growth of the population was markedly different. Rokkan was right in his claim that overseas emigration slowed down the growth of the rural proletariat much less so in Finland than in Ireland, where emigration markedly decreased the total population, however one could argue that it was Ireland that was the exception more than Finland. No other country in Europe except Ireland saw its population halved from 1840 to 1940.

Yet comparative research, even if it only utilizes two cases, can be of immense value. At its best, it raises new research questions and questions old explanatory models within the context of the individual cases. Consequently, it challenges previous scholarship, which inspires researchers to scrutinize their primary sources from a new perspective and in a more rigorous manner than before. The immediate effects can be seen in the intensification of primary research on the individual cases. In addition, for the purpose of creating universal theories and explanatory models of a general phenomenon, while a two-case comparison is undoubtedly not enough to establish a whole new paradigm, it can unravel an existing paradigm or point to certain weaknesses in it that future scholarship must try to solve.

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[25] Mc Mahon and Newby 2017, 167.

[26] Rokkan 1970, 70.

[27] Levine 2014, 332–333.

[28] Niemi 2003, 5.

Over the last two decades, comparative analyses between Ireland and Finland have been growing in number. Michael C. Coleman has compared the parallel language shifts that occurred in the countries.[29] Bill Kissane has addressed the individually different civil wars and their impact on perceptions of national identity in a number of articles.[30] Kati Nurmi has discussed the similarity of a set of cultural tropes that penetrate discourses and representations of national identity.[31] Marjaana Niemi has studied the urban reconstruction of the new capital cities of Dublin and Helsinki in the 1920s.[32] Sami Suodenjoki has delved into the similarities in agrarian agitation in rural Ireland and rural Finland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[33] More specifically on the famines, economic historian Cormac Ó Gráda has made frequent parallels between the countries' famines, as well as other famines.[34] Additionally, in 1991 Vappu Ikonen, in a rare piece in Finnish, wrote a brief essay on the parallels and differences between the Irish and Finnish famines.[35] More recently, Andrew Newby has been the most active scholar comparing Ireland and Finland, as seen in his numerous publications on different aspects of the Finnish famine with frequent parallels drawn to the Irish Famine.[36]

To summarize my point, the previous and numerous comparative works on the similarities and differences between the history of Ireland and Finland suggests that the chosen units for this study are not misplaced. Ireland and Finland share enough historical similarities that a number of scholars have already recognized this in their work. However, the countries' major famines and their representations have mostly been scrutinized from a predominantly insular national perspective, with predominance on the famines' effects on one supposedly homogenous national identity, while comparisons of any type are often reduced to merely contrasting secondary remarks. The exception is Andrew Newby's comparative work mentioned above, which is laudable, but it is debateable as to how much it has shaped mainstream thinking for either country's national historiography. Only time will tell.

This thesis attempts to reach beyond the national gaze by focusing on transnational phenomena such as famine, mnemohistory, and national narratives, although it is conscious of the unavoidable and inherently methodological nationalism that also underpins the effort at national

[29] Coleman 2010.

[30] Kissane 2013; Kissane 2000; Kissane 2004.

[31] Nurmi 2012.

[32] Niemi 2017.

[33] Suodenjoki 2017.

[34] Ó Gráda 2005; Ó Gráda 2009.

[35] Ikonen 1991.

[36] See Newby 2014a; Newby 2014b; Curran, Luciuk and Newby 2015; Newby and Myllyntaus 2015; Newby 2015; Newby 2017a; Newby 2017b; Mc Mahon and Newby 2017.

deconstruction. For a deeper discussion on the complexity of the matter, see subchapter 4.5.

1.2 SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The overarching question throughout this study has been this: how have these famines been historicized and represented in the public discourse? Taking my lead from this question, the potential sources are numerous. They include professional historiography, popular historicizing representations of the nation during and after the famine, political pamphlets, newspapers (especially when they report on commemorational activities), etc. In other words, in such a study anything that reflects in one way or another a publicly voiced opinion on the famine and the nation's associated history have been interpreted as a source for potential use. Thus, there are more potential sources than have been plausible to incorporate. In practice, the articles attached to this thesis have utilized a more precise and rigorous selection. Initially, I excluded folklore collections from this study on the basis, as I thought then, that they supposedly reflect more family and privately shared representations of the famines, in contrast to public projections. However, during this process, I have re-examined their utility and made partial use of them as well. The reason for this is explained in subchapter 3.2.2.

As Ireland and Finland constitute two separate contextual units, the detailed sources and their utility in answering research questions differ from one case to the other. For instance, the Irish Famine is present and referred to in virtually every narrative that even remotely deals with nineteenth century historical events, whereas in Finland the famine is not as easy to spot in historical literature, in fact or in fiction. The popular interpretation of history and the development of the historical craft in each national context took different paths. Furthermore, it is not unproblematic to measure the impact of one body of canonized national literature and then compare it with another canonized literature when the reading of cultures, genres, selection of audiences, distribution of texts, etc. differ significantly. The crux of the problem in such a comparative case is arriving at the definition of a suitable and universally shared category for what could be included as "canonized literature". With regards to physical commemorations, both countries possess an abundance of pertinent monuments. However, in Ireland the Famine is memorialized by many local and national monuments and museums, while in Finland there are only small scale local commemorational monuments of stone, or plaques in remote rural churchyards or forests.[37] The comparison between folklore collections is a challenging epistemological endeavour too, as these represent different generational levels of oral tradition.

[37] Mark-Fitzgerald 2013; Newby 2017a; Kraatari and Newby 2018.

In addition, there is the fact that the academic study of representation of the famine in Ireland is much more advanced than in Finland, which shapes what kind of research questions are meaningful in their appropriate contexts. For instance, Margaret Kelleher's work on the feminization of famine in Ireland inspired me to analyse how portrayals of gender have affected the Finnish famine representations, which resulted in article II. This was a novel approach in Finland, but for the Irish context this type of analytical framework had already been applied by previous scholarship. In other words, it was an outcome of the comparative perspective, but the article itself was not comparative.

To overcome such an imbalance in the meaning-giving of different forms of representation in various spheres of national contexts, I wanted to have at least one source category that could be regarded as providing a relatively comparable platform for spreading a national historical narrative. Hence, I directed my search towards history education in schools, and more specifically how history textbooks have incorporated the respective famines. National educational textbooks are the main distributer of socially and politically acceptable knowledge for a whole generation, and are thus an invaluable source of mnemohistorical representations - in theory at least.[38]

However, I quickly learned that even this was not such a straightforward platform for comparison as I had initially expected. Ireland and Finland presented two very different types educational contexts. While Finland had one largely uniform state-administered school system for elementary education, Ireland, on the other, had a number of different school systems. In addition, the most important National School system in Ireland did not even have history as an educational subject, not to speak of a state sanctioned national history textbook, until the end of the nineteenth century. So, how could I compare the abundance of Finnish national history textbooks with another national context that used history textbooks only in marginalized schools? This problem led me to abandon the comparison, and focus on a single national educational context in a separate academic outlet for each case, with contextually modified research questions accordingly. This resulted in articles IV and V.

The challenge in these articles was, primarily, to identify the history textbooks with the greatest national outreach for a different set of generations; and, that judgement could not be made on a shared criterion which could have been applied to both contexts. The next challenge was how I should contextualize textbooks in their appropriate communicational milieu before the actual representation of the famines in their respective national narratives could have commenced. Therefore, the articles' thematic foci diverge, with article IV focusing on shared narrative similarities in several textbooks, and article V on the conceptual narrative framework of nationality and its implication for how famine is represented. In the Finnish case, I had to find a

[38] Issitt 2004, 688.

way to systemize and contextualize the nearly twenty different history textbooks used, while in the Irish case the number of textbooks was much more limited, although richer in content where the Famine was concerned.

Essentially, a mnemohistorical study conducted through a comparative perspective requires a very deep cultural knowledge in not only one but two cultures, at least. And while that personal epistemological deficiency can be overcome by relentless studying in the less familiar comparative unit, I would never dare to proclaim myself an expert on the subject matter at hand. To make matters worse, the more I learn about one case the more conscious I become of my level of ignorance in the other case. In other words, the comparative perspective leads the scholar to suffer from an endless uncertainty, one that is markedly different from the uncertainty experienced by scholars that do not need to extend their span of knowledge beyond their own niche. I sought to remedy this deficiency by reading as much and as widely as possible on various themes and topics on Ireland, by visiting and researching in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin (for more than three months all in all, over several trip), and also elsewhere in Ireland, and by consulting a number of Irish friends and experts on Irish society. It was never enough to study just the famine period (1845-52), a massive literature in itself, but Irish history as a whole from the nineteenth century to the latter half of the twentieth century. I am grateful to all who have helped me along the way.

This is a study on what and how history has been represented, or as Jörn Rüsen phrased it, 'invented',[39] and what kind meaning must be attributed to events in the past for them to be acknowledged as a part of History. Therefore, the recognition of representation is crucial in this study. According to Frank Ankersmit, 'we can recognize representations only in contrast with other, competing representations.' Therefore, applying the comparative perspective through two cases (Ireland and Finland) of not competing but different representational contexts adds a higher level of robustness to the scrutinization of the representations. One should not mistake the emphasis on representations as a negation of what really happened. [40] The past and its representations, often in the form of a narrative, are complimentary with each other. These issues are discussed in-depth in chapter three and subchapter 4.1.

Consequently, the study of mnemohistory, and especially through the lenses of a comparative perspective, has undoubtedly led to a source selection that may appear, without appropriate contextual knowledge, to be the result of an arbitrary selection of sources and random application of qualitative methods. However, the innovative aspect of this thesis as a whole is not the sources *themselves* that were used, which have been available and used by many others previously, but is rather the perspective of analysing the nationality and famine representations within them through the concept of mnemohistory: a concept that in essence and as a matter of perspective runs

[39] Rüsen 2008, 1.

[40] Ankersmit 2008, 113.

through all the articles, although it is not always explicitly used in them. After all, my focus has been on sources that have been publicly available and widely distributed, because such sources are the best evidence of mnemohistorical representations.

In conclusion, a word about chronology in this thesis. In the thesis title, 1850 to 1970 refers to the approximate ending of the Irish Famine and the approximate ending of the Finnish mnemohistorical period, i.e. a century after the Finnish famine. The entirety of this long period is not addressed in any one article or chapter; each deals with only parts of it. Article I confines itself to nineteenth century Finland; article II, c. 1870 to 1920 Finland; article III approximately 1850 to 2000 Finland and Ireland. Article IV confines itself to 1870-1940 Finland. These years were chosen in order to follow a consistent selection criterion for the source material. A similar reason explains the chronological focus of article V, the 1830s to the 1920s. These last two articles could have, in theory at least, been extended much closer to the present time, because the textbooks are obtainable, but the source selection criterion, i.e. how to identify those textbooks with the greatest impact on a particular generation, would have required more elaborate modifications due to reforms in the school systems in these countries. Thus, for journal articles it seemed more appropriate to narrow the chronological scope in the way I did. The justification for the period stated in the title of this thesis is based on the idea that 1850 as a starting point directs attention to what happened after the Irish Famine, while 1970 refers to the end of the mnemohistorical era in Finland,[41] which coincided with the boom of raising famine memorials in rural Finland. Chapters five and six were both written explicitly to accommodate these two different temporal boundaries respectively.

1.3 WHY STUDY FAMINE, MNEMOHISTORY, AND NATION-BUILDING IN IRELAND AND FINLAND?

First, it must be recognized that the Irish Famine (1845-52) and the Finnish Famine in the late 1860s were exceptional famines in industrializing Europe. In terms of absolute and relative population losses they resemble more the famines in East or Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century than the general trend observed in nineteenth century Europe: urbanization, industrialization, economic growth, commodification, and improved living standards. The Irish population dropped from an estimated 8.5 million in 1845 to 6.8 million in 1851, due to increased mortality and emigration. Due to the continued pattern of emigration, the population of Ireland continued to decline until the 1920s, when it was around 4 million. The Finnish population dropped from

[41] An accurate title might have been "Famines in Memohistory and National Narratives in Ireland c. 1850 to 1950, and in Finland c. 1870 to 1970", but such seemed needlessly cumbersome.

1.840.000 in 1865 to 1.730.000 in 1868. Secondly, they were both peacetime famines, which distinguishes them from many other famines with major casualties. Thirdly, both famines took place in the backyard of an empire. Both countries have often been presented as the peripheries of Europe; assuredly, if one picks Vienna as the geographical core of Europe then, rightfully, both countries were on Europe's outskirts. However, there is more to core and periphery- issues than mere geographical distance.[42]

One of these aspects of core and periphery- issues is the mental geography of contemporaries, which entangles a number of perspectives on these famines. Primarily, they were both global famines, in the sense that they were publicized far and wide beyond the locality where the mortality was the highest.[43] They became media events of international proportions, also attracting international relief, and in the Irish case contributed to the long lasting growth of an Irish diasporic community.[44] These events occupied the attention of the ruling classes in their imperial cores, London and Saint Petersburg, and additionally were decisive moments for the administrators and politicians of the individual regions, which were themselves later to become nation-states with independent nationalist-minded visions of their identities. On the micro level, they were a test of the local community's internal cohesion, solidarity, and societal functionality. And finally, on the personal level, they meant numerous encounters with death, and miles of endless roads and waves for thousands migrating near and far. Even though the countries in question had long histories of famines, these particular famines were exceptional on all of these accounts. They became special events in the mindsets of their contemporaries, i.e. the generation that had to endure them.

The long history of famines in these countries have often been interpreted in two ways. One is that they represent an enduring cycle of poverty, often linked to a structural and political disadvantage that climaxed at these big famines.[45] Another is that the long history of famines is taken to represent the resourcefulness and endurance of the people living in a harsh land. This has taught the people to thrive in adversity, and if they fail, as those who died in the famine did, then this was perceived as a natural and perhaps even a divinely justified outcome. In both of these highly contentious interpretations, these great famines in the nineteenth century stand out as special, although they lead to different conclusions on the specific momentousness of the event itself for the nations concerned. It is therefore appropriate to contemplate whether we can somehow look beyond the metanarratives, for the most part

[42] See also Curran et al. 2015, 2-13.

[43] Männistö-Funk 2018; Delaney 2015.

[44] The concept "media event" can also be applied to historical events. See for example Wilke 2010, 45-60.

[45] On Finland e.g. Pulma 1985; Soininen 1974. On Ireland e.g. Solar 2017; Smyth 2012c; Nally 2012. Such characterization are not reserved only to these countries. See for example, China as the "Land of Famine", Li 2007.

national narratives, and if so how would we then interpret them? Stripped from contextually framed and conventional explanatory models, how special were they?

The Irish Famine is probably the most studied famine in human history, and the Finnish famine is also not lacking its own research tradition. Compared to most other famines in global history, the rich historiographical legacy of these famines provides enough sources for examinations of a variety of perspectives. I believe it safe to argue that in the long global history of famines these two famines have gathered more studies than most other famines, and for good reasons. They occurred in social and administrative environments that documented things as much as possible. The states, i.e. the imperial, national, and regional administrative units, were actively involved in this documentation, as well as the news press. In addition, the literary culture on a societal level evolved during and after the crises, and so added to the number of individual and publicized narrations, which taken together have provided historians with an abundance of different sources. Moreover, the organized collection of national folklore archives is very much in debt to the emerging or recently established nation-states. Scholars researching other famines that are much less documented have a lot to envy of the scholars of the nineteenth century Finnish and Irish famines.

From a mnemohistorical perspective the study of crisis, conflicts, and trauma has been the norm, but much of such work has focused on quite recent events, such that the people who experienced them can still remember, such as the Holocaust, which is probably the most studied single event in this field. However, there are issues that have been given less attention, such as the diversity of experiences during and after a crisis, and the notion that every crisis is not similar, and not even a singular crisis affects all memories in similar ways. Famines can thus contribute to this discourse, especially if it is remembered that famine is not just about starvation, that it is not only an event but also a process, that it has many interpretational meanings attached to it. Moreover, historical famines, and especially well-documented ones such as these that occurred 170 and 150 years ago, allow us to examine the long shadow of mnemohistorical dynamics in a way that, for instance, the Holocaust or any other "memorable" twentieth century event is for the time being incapable of. In addition, in some regards the contemporary evidence that we have from these famines can even be considered more trustworthy and less distorted by political governments, such as the Soviet (1932-33) and the Chinese famine (1959-1962). The Irish and Finnish famines provide a good testing ground for all sorts of social and political studies on crises.

Ireland and Finland have frequently been utilized as examples in deconstructive studies on nationalism and nation-building. The general paradigm in nationalism studies stresses the importance of the invention of national traditions, the imagination of communities, the representation of ethnic symbols and rituals, etc, which these cases have embodied. However, one subject that has been given less attention is the role of pivotal events for

nation-building processes. Partially this is so because the critical study of events in national histories is linked to a critical examination of those historians who wrote the national histories, and other agents in the field of national historical culture. When a scholar of nationalism deconstructs the national historians, he or she simultaneously takes a sceptical approach to the historicization of the events in these national histories. Thus, it is difficult to regard a past event as real if the representations of it are interpreted as unreal. To avoid this kind of epistemological problem, it is important to recognize that stressing the representational aspect of the past, or the imagination of the nation, is not the same as declaring the past event itself to be untrue. Imaginations are part of reality too.

This is where the comparative perspective can help us, because we can ascertain that the famines had realities that were not so national after all. Comparison keeps the scholar on his or hers toes, because it works as a constant reminder that there exists a multitude of alternative perspectives on the research subject. And this richness of perspectives, even if they are occasionally and seemingly in conflict with each other, does not diminish reality as such, but adds more layers to it.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The initial starting point for this research, beginning in Spring 2009 when I took Andrew Newby's course 'Northern neighbors: Britain and "Norden" since 1800' was this: how have these famines been historicized and represented in the public discourse? This has resulted in, admittedly, an atypical article-based thesis.

Each of the attached articles and thesis chapters have their own limited purpose, chronology, research questions, and outcomes, that in one way or the other has attempted to provide partial answers to this overarching question. Yet, the articles do not constitute typical case studies within the broader frame of this thesis. Articles I and II, and partially III, were written while I worked on the basis that this would become a monograph thesis and thus, I never envisioned them as case-studies of a general research question, according to the way most article-based theses are constructed. They were side-projects that happened to overlap with my doctoral research. It was not until Spring 2015 that I concluded that my research, or parts of it, would most effectively be communicated in the article format. It was at that moment when the first three articles became degree-enhancing utilities, but the fact is that they were not intentionally planned as such case studies.

It was also around this time, 2015 and 2016, that I came across the concept of *mnemohistory* and saw it as a potential analytical term that could help me make sense of the disconcerting debates and empirical problems that I confronted in collective memory studies. I had previously tried to characterize my research work with terms such as historical culture, cultural memory,

politics of memory, uses of history, and other similar examples, but none of them satisfied me. Despite some individual excellent studies, as a whole, there was too much interpretational leeway attached to these analytical categories, and none of them, in my opinion, seemed to guide the scholar to seriously engage with questions like who experiences, who remembers, who narrates and for whom. Mnemohistory, subsequent to my own specific clarification, seemed like the most appropriate term with which I could frame my work. Consequently, articles IV and V were deliberately planned as case studies on the educational aspects of famine mnemohistory. However, due to limitations of the article format, it was not feasible to operationalize and discuss in them the broader concept of mnemohistory. At that time, I also had plans for one comparative or two separate case articles on famine centenary commemorations, but these developed into chronologically much broader themes that laid the foundation of what would become chapter five, *The Irish Famine in Irish Mnemohistory,* and chapter six, *A commentary on famine memorials in Finland*. My reason to include them as chapters in the thesis and not as articles was partially motivated by the fact that this allowed me more room for comparative references where it seemed appropriate. Comparative references require rigid and elaborate justifications with an added contextual background, which may have been an issue with the limited word count of articles. By treating them as chapters I could circumvent this problem.

In order to integrate these diverse articles and draft articles into a thematically coherent and theoretically sound whole, I decided to explore the central theoretical frames that each article addressed only in a cursory manner, which forms a kind of background to the analysis of mnemohistorical cases. Hence, the extensive discussion and problematization of some aspects within famine studies, collective memory studies, and nationalism studies. Yet, they are issues that have directed and occupied my perspective throughout the research process. Hence, it seemed natural that I would discuss them in this summary thesis extensively. The articles themselves only made partial interventions or crossovers to one or two of these issues, and they did not theorize any of these vital issues in enough depth. Of course, much of this was due to the article format, which was determined by the targeted publishers' topical priorities and formal requirements. In addition, I wanted to utilize sources and discuss closely related issues that for one reason or the other had to be discarded from the original five articles. Chapters 5 and 6 thus became practical exercises in how to write the mnemohistory of a famine for one country. The former is a more extensive exercise, and the latter more of a reflective essay type.

The first three chapters in this thesis are devoted to presenting the current state of the art in these fields, which have often been viewed from an insular and isolationist perspective. Primarily, they carry the practical requirement of a PhD-thesis of reviewing the essential scholarship of these fields. Their second objective is to provide the theoretical background for the more empirical and descriptive chapters five and six. Thirdly, to the extent that my

discussion may seem occasionally redundant and circular, it is intentionally so, in order to mark how the fields overlap, intrude, and shape perspectives from one domain to another. I argue that in order to properly understand either famine or a famine's mnemohistory, or a national narrative, one has to be aware of how these interrelate with one another and how they shape the perspective and conclusion we arrive at in another domain. These three chapters form the necessary theoretical groundwork and background to the two remaining chapters, and are a complimentary discussion to the articles.

The broader, and in a sense pioneering research question, since no-one has previously attempted such an endeavour, is this:

I) Can we study the afterlife of famines without falling into the trap of unwanted methodological nationalism, and simultaneously be respectful towards both famine memories and histories? How? Furthermore, the comparative perspective that underlines much of this work is a key contributor to the opening of new, unexplored research questions. Hence, in the next hundred years after the famines, the societies and the proto-states transformed radically, and so did the public consumption, representation, and anticipation of their own history.

II) Does historical change have any observable implications for mnemohistorical processes? Does mnemohistory have any observable implications on historical change? In Finland? In Ireland? In general?

III) For future research, what new research problems has this thesis given rise to?

The central concept that I put forward is mnemohistory, especially when our focus is on the hundred years period of coexistence between those who can remember and those who cannot. I argue that this is the most promising candidate for studying a historical famine's afterlife, if we limit our interest to one hundred years after the fact, and within national contexts. In that sense, the function of chapters two, three, and four are that they review the essential literature of the core fields of study in order to situate the concept of mnemohistory, as I use it, in contrast with other closely related analytical categories. These chapters attempt to elaborate on the following sub-questions:

i) Famines: What are they? What have they been? What are the political dimensions of famine: as to their causes and consequences, their interpretation and representation? How do they affect societies and individuals, in the short as well as in the longer term?

ii) Mnemohistory: What is memory, what is history, and how do they interact with each other in representations of past famines and collective identities? What do we need to take into account when studying the afterlife of socially and politically complex crises, such as famines? How does the talk of 'memory' influence and shape the representations of famines? Why is mnemohistory better suited to

the analysis of famines' afterlives than other competing analytical perspectives?

iii) Narratives: When agents of community builders seek to reaffirm their sense of identity on a broader popular basis, through history and evocative memories, through the notion of cultural trauma, is there a pattern or a typical role for how major famines fit into such narratives that we, as historians, should be aware of? If the answer is affirmative, then what kind of pattern or role do major famines occupy in these contexts?

These sub-questions are answered through the broad reading of existing scholarship on the topics, through reference to the articles attached to this thesis, and by utilizing additional primary sources from the famine cases of Finland and Ireland as empirical examples.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THIS THESIS

Chapter two reconsiders some aspects of famine studies, beginning from Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus to the school of new famine analysis as championed by Stephen Devereux, Alex De Waal, David Keen, and others. The justification for this chapter is the often-found misconception that early nineteenth century political economists were all champions of laissez-faire politics and governmental non-intervention in response to famine threats. My intention is to show that governments have always been held accountable in the view of contemporaries, and were at least partially responsible for their subjects' food security; this is not a new invention espoused by new famine scholarship. Furthermore, as I argue that the mnemohistory of a famine cannot be separated from how the famine evolved, was experienced, and was viewed by contemporaries, and therefore it becomes essential to review what famines are and how they can be viewed. This is also congruent with the themes dealt with in articles I and partially article III, that discuss the famine events and their backgrounds. The latter part of this chapter is a reminder of the concrete, practical, bodily, and social problems that famines create. While the first part of this chapter deconstructs the abstractions of famines, the second part confirms, irrespective of their representations, that famines nonetheless are social and individual experiences that have real-life consequences for humans. Famines affect, shape, and transform lives, and it is important not to lose sight of this basic fact while analysing their representations.

Chapter three digs deeper into the scholarly discourses on collective memory, historical culture, and cultural traumas. Its main function is to justify my use of the term mnemohistory as a category of analysis, in relation to other similar analytical concepts used by other scholars. Here I am basically trying to answer what makes mnemohistory superior to other analytically similar categories. The state of the art in memory studies is often confusing, and the

terms used are sometimes used in an overlapping manner and sometimes with clear distinction. In this chapter I argue for the important recognition of agency in the analysis of whose memories we are talking about, and who is included in the public portrayal of "our" memory or history. I argue that as an analytical category, mnemohistory, due to its inclusiveness of mnemotic and historicizing perspectives within the same time frame, is better adapted for the study of famines, and probably other crises as well, when studied as collective memory. The novelty of this chapter is that it situates famines as a prism into political and social complexity, within collective memory studies.

Chapter four, on imagined communities, revisits the contemporary paradigm of nationalism studies. This is vital for the understanding of how historical narratives form the basis for national identification. Historians and educational systems have had a decisive role in shaping narratives and representations of the past into narratives that preach loyalism to the preferred nation-state. However, more importantly, especially in the light of the two previous chapters and their stress on agency and transgenerational identity formation, we must recognize that it is not only national communities that are imagined and who perform selective mnemohistorical narrations, but virtually every community. In this chapter I reiterate my previous critique against transgenerational memory discourses, to postulate how they contribute to the national discourses on the past. Furthermore, with regards to the general conundrum of how famines are included in national histories, this chapter problematizes that very question. Here I juxtapose the different community and political narratives found within nations. This forms a vital background for understanding why certain national narratives incorporate famines, and why others do so to a much lesser degree.

The objective of chapters five and six is to answer the broader research question I), by providing a model for how a famine in mnemohistory can be written. Therefore, they are stylistically quite descriptive and a little less explanatory than the earlier analytically more ambitious chapters. These chapters differ from the attached articles in the sense that they are chronologically broader and utilize a broader variety of sources. In other words, the articles could be viewed as case-studies to chapters five and six. These chapters utilize both original research and insights from the articles attached to this thesis, as well as additional relevant literature on the cases at hand.

Chapter five evolved from a draft manuscript on Irish Famine commemoration in the 1940s, which I later decided to incorporate as a chapter of this thesis. This allowed me to exemplify some of the themes and arguments as discussed in the three previous chapters, and further scrutinize issues that articles IV and V only makes cursory remarks upon. Understandably, some readers would probably want a similar discussion on the example of Finland, but on other hand Finland is the primary focus of the articles attached to this thesis: I and Antti Häkkinen discuss the long nineteenth century context of the Finnish famine in article I, article II focuses on famine representations in

Finnish national literature from the 1860s to the 1920s, and article III on the comparative touchpoints of both famines, as well as comparisons of divergent historiographies in Ireland and Finland. Finally, article IV discusses famine in Finland's folk school history textbooks from the 1870s to the 1930s. In order not to repeat much of what has been discussed on the Finnish case in the articles, I decided to devote one chapter more exclusively to Ireland.

Lastly, before the concluding discussion, chapter six provides a brief epilogue on famine commemorations in Finland. The aim of this chapter is to contextualise the local commemorations within the last phase of famine mnemohistory in Finland. It provides an opportunity to juxtapose different shades of national mnemohistory as discussed in the articles and earlier chapters, with the country's local remembrance as one form of local mnemohistory. Finally, I conclude the thesis by revisiting the central research question. In it, I discus my results and their significance, and present what kind of new research questions have been opened up by this research project.

2 FAMINE AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY

> *Famines imply starvation, but not vice versa. And starvation implies poverty, but not vice versa.* [46]

Social historians often group famines with other crisis affecting human societies: natural disasters and human conflicts.[47] And rightfully so, as famines do not happen in isolation from the environment or human activity, and they are undoubtedly a crisis. However, it should be recognized that not all crises in human history are similar, and that even famines have affected societies, localities, and individuals very differently. Concerning the inquiry into how famines affect societies, interpreting a famine through the lens of some other crisis in another society in another time, where the available technologies, hopes, aspirations, and life strategies differed is not a straightforward exercise, and it should be commenced with great caution. A natural disaster or a war may trigger a famine, but an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, or flooding are as such quite different crises affecting societies, and the societies as well as the individuals shaken by them have different ways to cope. Every famine is in this regard historically unique. Every experience in and around famine is unique. Every starving human being, as well as every witness of starvation, undergo unique experiences. So even if famine can be classified in the general category of crises, the analysis of a general crisis cannot determine and be applied to the interpretation of any single famine. The contextual approach is highly significant.

Famine analysis is always underpinned by some kind idea of what famine essentially is, and from what causes it originates.[48] A widely shared starting point is Cormac Ó Gráda's definition of famine as a 'shortage of food or purchasing power that leads directly to excess mortality from starvation or hunger-induced diseases.'[49] Furthermore, Ó Gráda distinguishes between famine, on the one hand, and endemic hunger or malnutrition, on the other. This categorization is important in determining what kind of policies should be advanced, or how a crisis can be comprehended: immediate relief or institutional reform.[50] However, because it is a categorization that implies certain policy options, it means that it is also an issue of direct political controversy, i.e. attempts by contemporary actors to impose their own of definition or to blur their political antagonists' definition. How contemporaries define a crisis and its main causes is a political battle that

[46] Sen 1981, 39.

[47] Mauch and Pfister 2009; Gray and Oliver 2004; Keen 2008.

[48] Edkins 2000, 19.

[49] Ó Gráda, 2009, 4.

[50] Ó Gràda 2016, 4.

begins immediately when the crisis becomes a priority concern, either in public or in the minds of the political elite.[51]

Concerning the causes of famines, an old demarcation is often drawn between natural and man-made famines. The least contentious definitions of man-made famines are those that have happened during, because of, or as an act of 'war by other means'.[52] The category of natural causes has been further subdivided into sudden changes in climatic, regular weather patterns, or environmental conditions that affect food supply on the one hand, and overpopulation in relation to available food supplies or production on the other.[53] It is noteworthy that both causal explanations have an overwhelming focus on food stuffs, which Amartya Sen calls a 'food-centered view', to which he juxtaposes his own theory on entitlements and markets.[54]

However, as Cormac Ó Gráda and Guido Alfani have lucidly pointed out, this line of division into natural and man-made famines can be detected already in the writings of two classical thinkers on political economy and famine: Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus,[55] even if they did not articulate it in this manner. The economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) distinguished between normal dearth and famine, where the later, according to him, never occurred but for 'the violence of government attempting, by improper means, to remedy the inconveniencies of a dearth.'[56] The demographic theorist Thomas Malthus (1766-1834), on the other hand, perceived famine as 'the last, the most dreadful resource of nature.'[57] Malthus believed that the capacity of land to produce food was limited, and increased more slowly than the human will and capacity for its own reproduction, i.e. the growth of the population. An imbalance was thus created, which at some point would dramatically restore demographic equilibrium, if not through humans' own forces of destruction, e.g. warfare, then through natural famines. The distinctions made by these theorists are contentious, but they form an important introduction and a vital reminder about how the discourses within the study of new famines

[51] See also Howe and Devereux 2007, 28-29. Recently this approach has been utilised in assessing the Finnish Imperial Senate's response to the harvest failures in the 1860s. See Lari Rantanen's splendid article. Rantanen 2018.

[52] Ó Gráda 2009, 229. When famines have occurred during war or as a warfare tactics, or in conflict-sensitive context it can be a little less contentious to frame a shortage of food situation as a man-made famine. This probably because it is so obvious. Examples like famines during the World War II: the *Hongerwinter*, the siege of Leningrad and concentration camps are of course highly contentious issues, but mainly for other reasons beyond the fact that they were man-made, which is pretty much taken as a self-evident fact. Without the war, these famines would never have occurred.

[53] Arnold 1988, 29-42.

[54] Sen 1981, 39.

[55] Alfani and Ó Gráda 2017, 1-3.

[56] Smith 1776, 520.

[57] Malthus 1798, 118.

are not so new after all. The language and the terminology used in these debates have gone through some changes, but the issues themselves have not.

The role played by the government is at the heart of the debate. Both Smith and Malthus had their concerns about this, but in slightly different ways. The Smithian analysis hinged upon a belief in market mechanisms and as little government interference in society as possible, although he did not reject government meddling altogether. Instead, he argued for such public institutions, public works, and public initiatives that would strengthen commerce and empower individuals, and where the private sphere was incapable of taking care of some sector, e.g. public education, then public funding should step in.[58] With regards to the creation of famine, problems would arise when governments started to react to a dearth through measures that halted commerce, for example by imposing trade barriers, which had been the norm in mercantile economic policy. The timing and the exact policy measures were of qualitative importance. According to Smith, if a government had done its job well, i.e. liberalizing its corn trade and improving communications, there would be no need for its harmful interference in the markets.[59]

For Malthus, the role of government was in avoiding such measures that increased population growth beyond the growth of land productivity. He believed that these two were arithmetically fixed variables, and therefore the most important measures that a government could take to counter a looming catastrophe would be, on the one hand, to restrict the poor classes from growing wealthier, because that would only lead to their increased reproduction,[60] and on the other to enlarge the state's territories through conquests of new agricultural lands. The latter would have a beneficial double-effect: on the one hand war would diminish the population through human casualties and, if successful it would bring new land under the control and cultivation of that government and its population. Through such measures, Malthus argued, famines could be avoided, or their severity could at least be curtailed, and thus societies could avoid an 'absolute famine' from taking shape. Thus, he hinted (and to this point we shall return to later on) that warfare, through its steady slowing-down effect on population growth, would act as an alternative to 'absolute famines'.[61] Otherwise, a 'gigantic inevitable famine stalks in the rear, and with one mighty blow levels the population with the food of the world.'[62] This was the principle of population. And that principle was to be understood as a natural law that governments could either

[58] Smith 1776, 721-814.

[59] Smith 1776, 520, 533-537.

[60] His idea was that human's desire for sex overrode all other rational considerations, and therefore the removal of any economic socioeconomic restrictions, e.g. higher wages for the poor, would only inspire them to have more children.

[61] Malthus 1798, 118.

[62] Malthus 1798, 119.

take into account in their policies or condemn their population to suffer from its consequences.

What both Enlightenment theorists had in common was that governments should act, if necessary, *well in advance of* a looming famine - although their opinions on *how* to act differed radically - and that actions taken during a crisis would either do more harm (Smith) or be inconsequential, because the forces of nature are just too powerful for any government to handle (Malthus). Nevertheless, the role of government in either creating or relieving the sufferings of famine was understood by both as paramount. By no means was government irrelevant, for it could always make things worse. So, even if these two theorists are often credited with justifying governments' passivity under the label of *laissez-faire* policies (a label whose justification can be contested), they did in fact provide intellectual support with which to blame the government, no matter how it had governed its society before the crisis erupted.

The important lessons from this brief theoretical overview of classical thinkers are also reflected in more contemporary famine discourses. Firstly, that dearth or crop failures are not the same thing as famine, and that they only develop into famines under some circumstances. This point cannot be emphasized too much, because the food-centred view regarding representations of famine has often assumed a dominant and exaggerated position. However, the functioning of the markets also plays a vital role, as do government policies.[63] Alex De Waal has emphasized the difference between a food shortage or dearth and 'famine that kills',[64] echoing the same point made by Smith and Malthus's famine versus "absolute famine". The one does not automatically lead to the other. Human agency is what makes the difference. The level of preparedness for food shortages, on a micro- and macro-level, makes a difference. The political dimensions, both international as well as national and local, alongside economic and social issues, are and ought to be at the core of scrutiny. The recognition that famine is not a purely natural catastrophe, such as a volcanic eruption, potato blight, or night frost, but that human agency impacts its outcome, is not a new idea. It was already recognized in the late eighteenth century, well prior to our mid-nineteenth century famines.

In other words, the role of government in creating or relieving a famine is an old problem, although the practical measures and the technical efficiency of policy implementations improved radically in the subsequent centuries as infrastructure, technology, industrialization, and democratic accountability developed.[65] Furthermore, the improvement in the practical effectiveness of government to shape its population's overall welfare after a famine would in turn affect famine's place in the national historical consciousness, by

[63] Sen 1981, 154; Ravallion 1987, 1-2; Drèze and Sen 1990, Drèze and Sen 1991.

[64] De Waal 2005.

[65] Weiss 2000, 150–151.

temporarily relegating it to a distant, technologically and politically backward past. The enlightenment narrative of progress further contributed to the perception that famines only occur in primitive societies, and thus that famines are an exotic feature of human experience. Modern societies, or societies that perceive themselves as modern, remain untouched by famines unless it is represented through media images from far-away countries.

Secondly, the role of government as a protector, creator, and regulator of the markets is of significant interest, especially among economists and economic historians. The work done by economist Amartya Sen has been an invaluable eye-opener in this regard. His main point in *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*, published in 1981, was that the famines in Bengal 1942-43, and Ethiopia and Bangladesh in the 1970s, were not caused by shortage of food in the designated areas, but from a lack of access to food; hence, Sen's work is known for its entitlement approach with regards to famine.[66] The famines he studied were caused by a dysfunctional market; grain speculators, hoarding, and deep inequality that manifested in a lack of jobs and money, and thus consumers, which led to famine. In other words, it was not about a lack of food, but a lack of entitlement to buy food. According to Sen, a famine can occur even without a sudden drop in food supplies, due to certain market dynamics.[67] In Ó Gráda's previously quoted definition of famine, Sen's influence can be detected in his inclusion of the notion of "lack of purchasing power". Sen's approach is of course the perspective of an economist that seeks to understand his object of study through some kind of economic rationale, which can be, and has been, criticized for its disregard of other aspects that affect human rationale.[68] Nonetheless, his work caused a paradigm shift, and henceforth scholars have been inclined to re-interpret famines by examining other social, political, and economic factors in many twentieth century as well as historical 'natural famines', that is, to understand what made a society so vulnerable and the markets so dysfunctional in the first place that a natural shock or market mechanisms could trigger a famine with deadly consequences.[69] Sen's contribution to the understanding of famine causations was that he complicated the division between natural and man-made famines. If market dynamics can cause famines, and it is humans that create the rules of the market and are its main operators, then can we truly separate a natural famine from a man-made famine? In the context of war, surely, we can speak of man-made famines, but in the context of peace the picture becomes more complicated.

[66] Sen 1981.

[67] Sen 1981, 160–166.

[68] Voutilainen 2017, 145–166.

[69] Watts and Bohle 1993; Davis 2002.

According to Sen's logic, famines should be understood as economic disasters, and not only as food crises.[70] This provides us with a more suitable framework to understand the underlying political tensions that impinge upon famine discourse within national narratives and political debates. The critique (or praise) of famine policies are often entangled with the critique (or praise) of a larger set of economic policies, personas, or symbols that arise from very specific historical contexts. Politicians often criticize their opponents as a matter of principle, and sometimes the target of the critique is not so much a specific policy but a critique against *who* is implementing it (e.g. the British government). Similarly, sometimes a policy is lauded not so much because it was appreciated in the past, but because the *person* who implemented it and is associated with the choices made during that period has become highly revered, and therefore his or her policies, which at the time may have been considered contentious, are now with hindsight applauded (e.g. Johan Snellman as one of the great political figures in Finnish history). Because famines during peace are more similar to extreme economic depressions than traumatic wars, this also impacts the way they are discussed afterwards. Therefore, we should not ask what other crises can tell us about how national mnemohistories are formed, but more precisely, what the politicization of economic depressions can tell us about famines.

A Malthusian perspective that emphasizes the powerful forces of nature and the overwhelming character of an inevitable famine caused solely by food shortages, i.e. a food-centred view,[71] carries with it an ethical and political danger. Firstly, it usually fails to enable (possibly) well-meaning policy makers and administrators from grasping the early famine warning signs that a volatile market creates as a pre-condition for famines.[72] Secondly, it avoids the question of political responsibility, or the responsibility of any individual for that matter. Thirdly, the importance of agency (preparedness, coping, and survival strategies) in confrontations with larger than life challenges in historical situations is often ignored. Perhaps it is unsurprising, therefore, that often it is the powers that be - governments and elite members of society - that emphasize this particular perspective in their narratives: population pressure was headed towards disaster, forces of nature were too overwhelming, nothing more could be done, there was too little food, there were too many people, the government did its utmost, and so on. Forces of nature, divine displeasure, or some other incomprehensibly difficult obstacle in extraordinary times, are and often have been used to absolve leaders from judgement or even critical inquiry. And lastly, the Malthusian perspective, or the logic underpinning it, can also be used as a cover justification for other and very different policies pursued by vested interests; most evidently, wars of conquest (think of Nazi rhetoric on German Lebensraum in the 1930s and 40s), or coercive labour and

[70] Sen 1981, 162.

[71] Sen 1981.

[72] Sen 1999, 209; De Waal 2005, 29-32; Howe and Devereux 2004, 353-372.

collectivization policies (think of famines in the USSR and the People's Republic of China), or the reclamation of frontier lands from indigenous people to enhance agricultural production, which may quickly transform a food shortage into an acute and severe famine. In other words, in evoking a Malthusian argument there is always the ethical risk of it being appropriated as a justification for unethical political purposes.

However, Malthus was not wrong altogether, and he still inspires scholars to test his assumptions.[73] The banal insight that too little food for too many people inevitably leads to scarcity or outright famine is in itself a sound proposition, and can hardly be rejected without notable but vital clarifications. However, the question that remains interesting and leads the way forward in current famine research is concern over *where* we set the boundaries of the spatial scope and the historical context of each individual case under scrutiny. Indeed, the use of sophisticated methods that combine quantitative data with GIS mapping seem to be experiencing a boom in economic history at the moment.[74] For example, do we accept that a peripheral parish such as Ullava in Finnish Ostrobothnia suffered from an absolute food shortage in the winter of 1867-68, or do we situate it in the context of its closest neighbouring parishes, or the province of Wasa, or the grand-duchy of Finland, the greater Baltic economic sphere, or even the larger Russian Empire? Likewise, to what extent should a workhouse *food* shortage in Skibbereen be contextualized as part of shortage of *resources* in Skibbereen Poor Law Union, County Cork, the island of Ireland, or the British Empire? Or, is it an institutional shortage in workhouses in general, or a shortage affecting a whole region, or does it overlap with socioeconomic categories in a number of spatial and/or social contexts? These are not inconsequential and purely semiotic questions. On the contrary, they dramatically alter the problem and shift the focus from a food-centred view to: why here, and why not there?

In addition, even if it is established that an absolute food shortage was the case in a designated area, the most important follow-up question is how did the affected population redistribute scarcity, and how did this come to shape levels of mortality, and for whom?[75] Consequently, even seen through lenses

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[73] Most substantially, his idea that the improvement in human's economic conditions, mainly through higher income, would lead to population growth is plainly wrong in the light of empirical and historical evidence from the last few centuries around the world. The general trend has been the very opposite to what Malthus projected: when incomes rise and people become wealthier, fertility rates go down. This can be observed on national levels as well, according to social-class divisions. See Persson and Sharp 2015, 50-59.

[74] The *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine* (Crowley, Smyth and Murphy 2012), published by Cork University Press in 2012, is a good and weighty example of such an approach. Also, during the European Social Science History Conference in Belfast 4th – 8th April 2018, the use of GIS and quantitative methods to study famines, as well as other phenomena, was pronounced.

[75] Sen 1981, 154.

of the neo-malthusian analytical framework that some scholars adapt today,[76] the question of politics and the power of resources at different hierarchal levels of society form the most fascinating part of modern famine studies. This applies as much to modern twenty-first century famines as it does to historical, even medieval famines.[77]

Natural shocks or environmental degradation are often seen as causing or triggering famines, especially were the context is an agricultural society.[78] This was also the case for the Irish and Finnish famines, which were triggered by crop failures [see article III]. In terms of outlining the structural causes of famines, socioecological adaptive capabilities do have their part to play. However, the natural factors should also not be overstated. Nature does not determine how humans respond. Moreover, the causal effect becomes more complex the higher we move on the macroscale. The Irish Famine was not caused by the potato. Nor was the Finnish famine caused by the Little Ice Age. It was human societies that had sown the crops and human societies that had to cope with the diminished returns. To the extent that this cycle had been going on for some time, it was also human societies that had to find a solution to breaking out of that cycle of diminished returns. Scarcity of food due to crop failure, i.e. natural causes, does not in itself explain why a famine kills, or whom it kills.

As human populations have spread around the globe, they have often adapted their means of living according to the demands set by the perceivably normal variations of the local climate and other natural resources.[79] The problems for populations arise when something unexpected happens in the environment, such an unknown disease that destroys the crops, or when communities change their behaviour and/or grow and expand into new territories where the natural conditions may be slightly different.[80] In other words, explaining famine through a natural monocausal effect is the Malthusian narrative in disguise, for it presents nature as setting the limits for

[76] It needs to be emphasized that I hold a high esteem for scholarly interest in Malthusian theories, and that the term neo-malthusian do not imply a denigrating tone. Current studies within historical demography and economic history frequently utilize, hypothesize, and measure different aspects of population pressure and their roles in creating a population crisis. That is, they empirically test Malthusian theories. In these studies, the effort is usually to discover or disapprove some part of Malthusian populational theory, and often to make a sophisticated quantitative assessment of its overall impact on the development of a crisis and its severity. For example, Mokyr 1983; Møller and Sharp 2014; Solantie 2012; Voutilainen 2015; Fernihough, Kelly and Ó Gráda 2018 (paper at ESSCH Belfast - conference).

[77] Alfani and Ó Gráda stresses the importance of public institutions. Alfani and Ó Gráda 2017, 19-23.

[78] Brázdil et al. 2005.

[79] Brázdil et al., 2005, 42-43.

[80] For example, Solantie 2012, 170-172; Smythe 2012e, 13-18.

human population and disregards the human factor of responding to it.[81] More importantly, in the light of the politics of famine and the politics of mnemohistory, we must acknowledge the paradoxical tradition of explaining the Finnish famines as caused by climactic factors as well as explaining Finnish survival from famine as a lesson learned from these same factors [see article II].[82]

For example, Heli Huhtamaa, who has studied subsistence crises in medieval Novgorod and Ladoga, has argued that 'during every famine period there is evidence of other contributing factors, such as unfavourable weather phenomena, disease, or social unrest.'[83] And this interpretation is in line with recent general overviews of historical famines.[84] A food-centred view can only partially explain why some people died, but it cannot explain how some people managed to live during a crisis. In this regard, only the inclusion of societal and political perspectives can advance our knowledge of famines.

As a result, what modern famine scholarship has done is to problematize our division between natural and man-made famines, the causes behind sudden food shortages, vulnerability, and long-term malnutrition in general.[85] After deeper reflection, it seems that this division, between man-made or natural famines, gained strength after the major atrocities committed by governments in the twentieth century, where it served an outright political purpose in claiming that some famines were man-made, such as Darfur, Holodomor, and Shoah, and suggesting that the response from the international community should be more of an interventionist type, even rather military action than humanitarian relief.[86]

The declaration of a 'natural famine', on the other, seems to invite its audience to share in a more ethically neutral crisis, where those receiving relief aid are perceived as more deserving of help. This was certainly the case with the Live Aid concerts in 1985 and the portrayal of innocent, impoverished, and passive Ethiopians suffering from the consequences of drought. Ten years earlier the same population had not been deemed to deserve similar levels of sympathy in the western media, which had much do to with the political constellation of the Cold War and the need for Western governments to support the country's current ruler, Haile Selassie.[87]

The natural vs. man-made famine discourse is not only about explicit political media framings; it is also a source of 'othering' and reconstructing identities through representations of poverty, power-relations, and enemy

[81] See also Edkins 2000, 31.

[82] For examples Myllyntaus 2009; Solantie 2012.

[83] Huhtamaa 2015, 562-590; see also Huhtamaa 2017.

[84] Voutilainen 2017; Brázdil et al. 2005.

[85] Devereux 2007, 9-11.

[86] Jenny Edkins situates the origin of this discourse in the enlightenment era and the birth of modernity (late eighteenth and early nineteenth century). Edkins 2000.

[87] Voutilainen 2017, 11-16.

figures.[88] Natural famine portrays its victims as helpless subjects struggling against natural forces, in an often childlike manner; indeed, the needs of women, what Margaret Kelleher calls the 'feminization of famine',[89] and children are a constantly recurring trope in media representations of social catastrophes. They have the function of evoking empathy, while simultaneously portraying the local men as absent, and either as too weak to care for their community's supposedly weaker members, or simply irresponsible. The victims are portrayed as innocents to whom something unwanted has happened. They cannot function without help. They are dispossessed, and have become 'depoliticized subjects'.[90] This elevates the viewer, often nowadays assumed to be an affluent middle-class member of the developed or western world (or in the nineteenth century, for example, an urbanized university professor), as socioeconomically secure and superior, an almost paternalistic position, where he or she can freely choose whether to help or not, whether to donate to a relief fund or not, and thus it offers a chance to reinforce an identity as a moral and righteous person.[91]

Natural famines present an anti-image of the modern world where famines, understood as technical food shortages, should belong to a bygone age, and therefore they are perceived as a symptom of a backward and primitive community.[92] This point of view is from the privileged, affluent, and technologically advanced societies, nowadays often countries associated with 'the west'. But in Ireland and Finland this same discourse can be located within their national discourses as subnational backwaters, but othered according to regions, minorities, or means of livelihood. Figure 1, a rare portrayal of a severely malnourished Finnish twelve year old boy, taken from Kuhmo (in the province of Kainuu) during the famine in 1902-3, performs this same function. It may shock the modern Finn, because here the starving child is recognizable as a Finn and not as an African child, as is so often portrayed in modern media outlets. Yet the article that incorporates this photograph performs the function of othering a subnational target for a national audience. It projects Kainuu as *Hungerland* (Nälkämaa), a backward region, one that is alien to and distant from the more prosperous southern parts of Finland at the time.[93] By locating the famine-phenomenon in a peripheral region that is somewhat alien "us", the immediate need to revive "our" own famine history under similar conditions, only thirty-five years ago, is also projected to this other location.

[88] See e.g. Edkins 2000; Weiss, 2000, 122, 157; Arnold 1988.

[89] Kelleher 1997.

[90] Edkins 2000, 101.

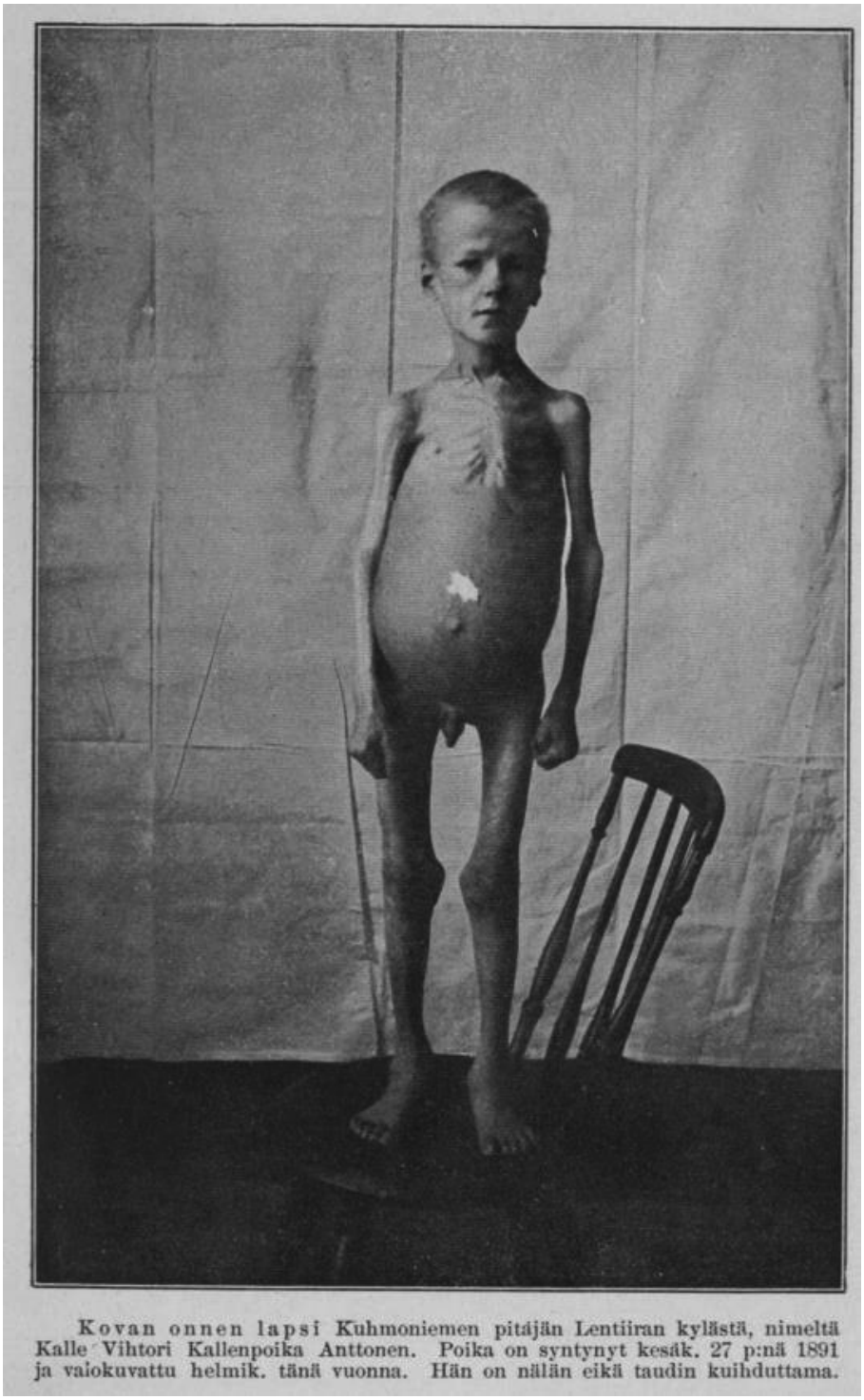
[91] Compare to Keen 2008, 164–165.

[92] Edkins 2000, 14.

[93] Uuden ajan kynnyksellä 1903, 107–113.

The troubling acknowledgement that famine can happen and indeed has happened *here* is thus relocated to *there*.[94]

[94] Sometimes, and more often in a historiographical perspective, the definition used for a region can be extrapolated to represent a larger geographical or political unit, such as the case of 'nälkämaa' coming to stand for Kainuu, and is sometimes even used as an analogy for the nation as a whole. A recent example of this is found in the title of an academic article collection 'Nälkämaasta hyvinvointivaltioksi – Suomi kehityksen kiinniottajana' [From Hungerland to Welfare-state – Finland catches up with developed countries]. See Koponen and Saaritsa 2019.



Kovan onnen lapsi Kuhmoniemen pitäjän Lentiiran kylästä, nimeltä Kalle Vihtori Kallenpoika Anttonen. Poika on syntynyt kesäk. 27 p:nä 1891 ja valokuvattu helmik. tänä vuonna. Hän on nälän eikä taudin kuihduttama.

Figure 1 Photo from Uuden ajan kynnyksellä 1903

On the other hand, by invoking the theory that famine is man-made, one is simultaneously claiming that some other humans are responsible for its creation, and therefore it is often used as a prism through which a political conflict is made visible, or even supported. In this instance, the othering may have identity functions in at least three directions: the two or more conflicting partners and the viewer-self. The viewer may empathize and identify with one of the belligerents, but in his or her role as an outsider s/he may offer authority and credibility to a biased particular narrative. The viewer may also be reconfirmed in their belief that the belligerents are primitive and barbarian, and incapable of solving disputes in an orderly and just manner, which reinforces the outsider as a sensible, cautious, and wise person. Through the confrontation with famine as taking place "there" instead of "here", and as something that concerns "them" instead of "us", the detached observer embodies the freedom of choice in which he or she can or should act. The real famine victims do not have the luxury of such options.

The new famine perspective, to great degree inspired by and as a critical continuation of the work of Amartya Sen, Martin Ravallion, and Jean Drèze,[95] aims at providing better policy guidelines for famine prevention. Its main contributors include Stephen Devereux, Alex De Waal, Paul Howe, and David Keen, among others, who have illuminated the fact that wherever a modern famine hits, usually there is some background of political conflict, bad governance, political prioritization, economic inequality, or widespread poverty which exacerbates natural triggers such as crop failures so that they become mass mortality events; however, these political, social, and legal structures are often neglected in the representation of the famine in the media.[96] Neither are democratic regimes in any way superior when it comes to famine prevention.[97] On the other hand, attempts to frame famine in a purely technocratic manner, where food supplies can be calculated and nutritional intake measured and famine severity classified, can also be used as attempts to depoliticize the phenomena of chronic malnutrition and famine. According to Paul Howe, famine "is not a linear process, but a dynamic system that arises from the presence of certain conditions."[98] Furthermore, from an econometric growth perspective the evidence suggests, with the exception of man-made famines, that the wealthier a society is and the more equally its wealth is spread, the less susceptible it is to suffer the consequences of momentary food shortages.[99] Thus, Miikka Voutilainen's study unsurprisingly suggests that in the Finnish famine high mortality rates overlapped with regions that showed signs of higher rates of poverty prior to the famine.[100] Much the same also

[95] Drèze and Sen 1990a, 1990b and 1991.

[96] De Waal 2015, 1528-1529.

[97] Rubin 2009.

[98] Howe 2010, 51.

[99] Compare to Devereux 2009.

[100] Voutilainen 2016, 150–164.

applies to the Irish famine.[101] Furthermore, in the twentieth century famines have only occurred in wealthier and democratic countries when they have been confronted with a violent exogenous chock, i.e. a war. As a general rule, the wealthier a unit is, be it an individual, a family, or a community or state, the more adaptive it is when a shock hits it.

The caveat is of course how one defines "society", and where its borders are drawn, both geopolitically and demographically as well as in terms of equal citizenship.[102] In many modern famines the 'famine that kills' ends at some kind of political border. For example, there was famine in North Korea in 1995-98, but no famine in South Korea, and what famine scholars need to ask, and indeed are increasingly asking, is why that is the case, and what does that tell us about the importance of political, social, and economic variables in relation to natural hazards? Indeed, what is the role of 'social capital', in both public and 'quasi-private' contexts, in determining group/individual resilience and coping?[103] Because if famine sprung from a purely natural cause, then political borders should have a much smaller effect on mortality outcomes. Regarding older famines, scholars need to ask: is it really the case that borders do affect mortality, and if so, then why? And if not, then why not? The recent work of historians studying famines in Europe has begun to apply the perspective of whole regions, instead of nation states.[104] Some as transnational regions, and some as regions within present day nation states. The important lesson to draw from this is that just because agrarian societies were more vulnerable to weather anomalies we should not assume that therefore state or local governance would have had less influence on mortality outcomes.

Defining the borderline of a society is also often at the heart of critiques against the role of governments during and after a famine. This is what Adam Smith criticized governments for doing in exacerbating a food crisis, that by imposing artificial trade barriers such as export embargoes, the governments were in fact readjusting the border for their own selfish purposes. Mike Davis, an American marxist-environmentalist, on the other hand, has accused the British imperial governance of nineteenth century India of worsening the local food shortages because they did not apply export embargos during the famines in Victorian India, which according to him had been the normal custom when indigenous rulers controlled India.[105] Perhaps unsurprisingly, this very same argument was used by Irish nationalists during and after the Famine in the 1840s and 50s [see article III]. No matter where the borders are set, it seems that the government can always be held accountable, or be excused, for being on the wrong side of them.

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[101] Smythe 2012b; Ó Gráda 2012, 176–177.

[102] For example, on the Soviet Ukrainian case see Applebaum 2018, 200-208.

[103] Maxwell et al. 2016.

[104] Alfani and Ó Gráda 2017.

[105] Davis 2002, 31-41, 285-288.

For mnemohistory, and the shape of national historiography, this presents enormous and not so easily solved problems and consequences, because political borders and how they are perceived tend to fluctuate over time and in memory. When Ireland was struck by famine in the 1840s it was one of the poorest regions in Europe, and at the same time it formed a part of the richest state in the world: the United Kingdom. So, was Ireland poor or wealthy, one may ask. We could look at estimates of GDP per capita and draw some kind of conclusion from that, but then again how we define the measured unit (Ireland, the UK of Ireland and GB, Leinster or Connemara) affects the outcome. Therefore, an econometric approach to explain the famine (e.g. in terms of distributions of wealth and inequality) varies according to which historical borders are applied - past or present borders, geopolitical or institutional borders - and for whom did the said borders constitute an obstacle compared to those who were unaffected by them. Who are the famine victims, and to which collective narrative do they belong, and how do we differentiate them from the famine witnesses, i.e. those who produced the bulk of our mnemohistorical sources and narratives? Should we think of Irish famine emigrants as transnational migrants that crossed borders (a present-day perspective), or did they move within a larger transatlantic region with relatively liberal border controls (a historical perspective)? Should we emphasize Irishness or Britishness as their main identity marker, or is it the land they eventually settled in (America or Australia) that is more important? As a literary trope in the writing of Emily Lawless, can we imagine famine as a place that one can leave from?[106] If Ireland would have remained a part of the United Kingdom, would we still be talking about the Irish Famine? Or, would we refer to just a minor chapter in the history of British famines, where Ireland would only constitute a region that suffered the most when the potato crop failed. Indeed, the way the Famine and its impact has been downplayed in Northern Irish, specifically Ulster's, historical culture is perhaps indicative of such a tendency at work.[107] Nevertheless, the scale of perspective matters. The conceptual associations and points of identifications matter. And even more so when we contemplate who is entitled with the proper authority to representant the narratives of a historical event and an imagined community.

2.1 HOW DO FAMINES IMPACT INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY?

Every famine is unique, and has its own special local characteristics that can and ought to be examined from a detailed contextual perspective. Scholars have attempted to identify certain universal features, especially concerning health and socioeconomic effects on famine-affected populations. These could

[106] Hansson 2015.

[107] See for example Smyth 2012a, 418; Kinealy and Mac Atasney 2000.

be divided between immediate effects and long-term or even transgenerational effects. However, here I will focus on the immediate effects, and make only cursory comments on the more complex long-term effects.

For any event to have a memorable trace in any society or individual, it must have a recognizable impact. Famines have a negative impact on the majority of a population, which causes individual suffering. For societies, famines may also have some beneficial effects, in that the famine may have given rise to or accelerated an ongoing development or shuffle the distribution of wealth, but whatever the benefits are in the long run, they are always paid for by the individual suffering during the intense famine. It is important that we analytically distinguish between famine as an abstract concept, that is used to distinguish a period of time for a social unit, from the personal way that individuals experience famine. Individuals are affected directly by specific shocks that are not necessarily at that time associated with the various macroprocesses, and only afterwards become known in society as famines, or some other related nomenclature. So, let us summarize what kind of sufferings famine can cause.

2.1.1 HUNGER AND SICKNESS

Famine is a state where food supplies or entitlements to food suddenly drop. This causes widespread hunger for the affected population. Insufficient or even harmful nutritional intake causes pain, and is often linked with a rise in epidemic diseases.[108] The spread of epidemics also increases as hygienic conditions worsen due to lack of resources and as people are on the move, and individual living arrangements are increasingly made with only short-term goals in mind; i.e. where to find the next meal and shelter. During peacetime famines, the majority of deaths are caused by some kind of disease, and only rarely by actual starvation.[109] In the historiography of the Finnish famine, this quite universal phenomena has caused some controversy, since Oiva Turpeinen juxtaposed these two main causes of death against each other in an attempt to write hunger out from the Finnish famine years, as the "years of horror" ("kauhunvuodet").[110] In fairness, the division is superficial, as hunger and diseases are not biochemically and physiologically easily separated, and as Miikka Voutilainen has noted "famines do not only exemplify what succeeds in killing humans *first*, but also what in general humans *potentially can* die from".[111] Nonetheless, it is safe to say that the direct consequences of longstanding hunger or malnutrition lead to an increased vulnerability to

[108] Dasgupta and Ray 1990, 193.

[109] Ó Gráda 2009, 108-109;

[110] Turpeinen 1986.

[111] Voutilainen 2017, 54.

diseases and increased risk of premature death[112] for everyone, but not in equal proportions. Cormac Ó Gráda speaks of "hierarchies of sufferings".[113] The affluent are much safer than the poor. Infants, small children, and the elderly are always at a larger risk of dying, but then again during famines the most dramatic increase in the risk of dying is confronted by the healthiest age cohort: those of working age. This is one feature that quite visibly distinguishes famine from normal times, as an episode of social crisis. Women also tend to have a better chance of survival than men during famines, in contrast to the public perception that women suffer the most during periods of crisis. But then again famines are not just any kind of crisis.[114] Humans can suffer from longstanding malnutrition, or even a total lack of food, for several days and maybe even weeks if they consume less energy, but not for an eternity, and a killing disease may prove more quickly fatal.[115]

Malnutrition also leads to lower productivity in work capacity,[116] which in itself reinforces the circle of economic depression and persistent poverty. Accidents that may lead to lethal injuries become more common when work performance suffers from insufficient nutrition and energy intake.[117] A chronic weakness also hampers individuals' capability to manage other daily routines, such as e.g. taking care of children and their needs,[118] and thus it is not surprising to find that wherever longstanding poverty prevails the hygienic conditions usually deteriorate too. In addition, poor people and poor societies have less resources (easily exchangeable property, currencies, and time) to save and to invest in projects that would be beneficial in the long run. People who have a history of malnutrition to which their body have adapted (e.g. smaller body size) are also more likely to be excluded from the more lucrative long-term labour contracts, especially if an employer takes into consideration that person's susceptibility to illness, and thus they in general tend to resort to short-term contracts. And, as Dasgupta and Ray conclude: "Short-term contracts simply do not look ahead."[119]

Nevertheless, both starvation and famine diseases are horrible conditions that sooner or later lead to a premature death, and thus involve a lot of fear and stress both for the individual and his or her close family and friends. They

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[112] Dasgupta and Ray 1990, 193.

[113] Ó Gráda 2009, 90–92.

[114] Ó Gráda 2009, 98–102.

[115] Voutilainen 2017; also Pitkänen 1993.

[116] Dasgupta and Ray 1990, 224.

[117] The Finnish national statistics report a clear increase in the number of deaths due to "accidents" ["döde genom andra olycksfall"] in the year 1868, with 530 accidents as the cause of death compared to 1866 with 406 and 1867 with 404. Bidrag till FOS VI. 33. *Folkmängdens förändringar*, 417. Despite possible errors recording the real causes of death, we may interpret this data as a proxy for a general increase in accidents during famines.

[118] Aber, Jones and Cohen 2005, 115–116.

[119] Dasgupta and Ray 1990, 240.

cause suffering both slowly and immediately. If the deceased is one of the main breadwinners, then economic and psychological anxiety among the survivors increases, which leads to an even greater focus on short-term gains and more desperate means of subsistence strategies. Consequently, the death of one leads to the increased suffering of others, a greater focus on short-term gains and survival strategies, and a heightened possibility of premature death.[120] Whether this cycle actually causes "trauma" in the manner we identify today is a moot point for discussion, unless we can examine very precise individual cases, because despite an otherwise rich source material concerning these famines there is a profound lack of certified psychiatrists that could have made the diagnosis in the mid-nineteenth century. Yet, we must be sensitive enough to recognize that death within a household has the potential to trigger trauma or, even more likely, that it increased the risk exponentially for similarly tragic events to occur in the near future. Reading local histories or local parish registers provides a better sense of the intensity on a micro scale: it was not uncommon for whole families to perish after the main bread winner stopped generating income for the family.[121]

One subject that has been the focus of many scholars is the various health impacts of famine. Many of these research projects have serious methodological weakness that constrain the interpretations that can be drawn from them. For example, some studies include famine within an overly broad definition of disaster, which does not sufficiently take into account the contextual limitations of each specific famine.[122] Another is the question of

[120] Although, from a pure resource scarcity perspective, the death of one individual potentially increases the personal share of available resources of the survivors, both on a micro level as well as on a macro level. One indicator of this phenomenon is when GDP per capita increases during famines, which leads to the econometric impression that the concerned country is becoming richer. In fact, GDP per capita increases in such cases because it is a reflection of the total GDP divided by the total population. Because there is a smaller population to share in the total GDP, i.e. less unproductive mouths to feed due to mass mortality, the result is a growth in the GDP per capita figure. This does not automatically mean that the quality of life has improved. Furthermore, using the GDP per capita as a socioeconomic measurement during famines is problematic, because it is based on the assumption that a) there are resources, and b) they are to be shared at least relatively equally. However, famine is the precise opposite of at least one of these conditions. If there is no food whatsoever, which was the case for many individual households, then it does not really matter whether there are less people to share food that does not exist. Or, if someone has food but is not prepared to share it, a manifestation of extreme inequality, the "per capita" function loses its meaning. Kari Pitkänen interprets the dispossessed migration from one's home parish as a symptom of a local unwillingness to share resources. Pitkänen 1991a, 221-222.

[121] Juustila provides a transliterated table of deaths from Nurmes in 1868. It includes a disheartening list with the date, name, social status, age and presumed cause of death of each individual 1218 parish member who died (out of a total population 8638 in 1865). Juustila 1965.

[122] E.g. Saulnier and Brolin 2015; Van den Berg and Lindeboom 2016.

cohort selection,[123] which if not done cautiously with regards to the specific contextual social stratification might easily lead to very surprising results: that famine had no impact, or even that famine improved public health.[124] It is therefore important to add the notion of selection and scarring to the discussion, as is done by Matthias Blum, Christopher Colvin, and Eoin McLaughlin. They studied the effect of famine upon stunted height from two prison archives, one from rural Clonmel in County Tipperary and one from urban Dublin. The two samples gave them opposite results. In the rural sample, which had higher mortality rates during the famine, there seemed to be no effect whatsoever, while in urbanized Dublin, where mortality was much lower and population growth even intensified, they discovered a notable effect, with shorter inmates being born during the famine. This seeming paradox: intense famine → no later health effects and minor famine → clear effect, is explained through selection and scarring. The witnessed phenomena is a type of selection amongst the remaining population, because the actual affected group died, while in other cases the affected population suffered but survived and thus were only scarred, which potentially can be detected in historical sources.[125]

Within the constraints of these limitations, the conclusion from a number studies indicates that especially prenatal and early life exposure to famine may have a number negative effects in later life, such as stunted height and a larger risk of suffering from hypertension, diabetes, obesity,[126] cardiovascular diseases,[127] chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma,[128] and mental health issues.[129] Lumey and van Poppel's study, based on the Dutch famine of 1944-45, concluded that the most consistent pattern of associations between prenatal exposure are to be found in adult body size, diabetes, and schizophrenia, while some other outcomes require further confirming studies.[130] With regards to transgenerational health effects, which underpins the discussion of post-memory and intergenerational community building, but is often neglected in cultural effect analysis, the clinical verdict from the only study done in Netherlands (most of these studies are the sole examples of their kind) is that the grandchildren of individuals who suffered from

[123] I.e. did people under scrutiny really suffer from malnutrition during famine or something other or were they somehow selected during or after the famine?

[124] For example, Kannisto et al. did not find any lagged mortality effect in the Finnish famine cohort. Kannisto et al. 1997. Sixteen years later Doblhammer et al. re-examined the Finnish case with cohort heterogeneity taken into consideration and they discovered that the famine cohort, and especially males over 60 years of age had a lower life-expectancy. Doblhammer et al. 2013.

[125] Blum et al. 2017. See also Quaranta , 85-122.

[126] Hult et al. 2010.

[127] Sparén et al. 2003.

[128] Abeelen et al. 2013.

[129] Broek and Fleischmann 2017.

[130] Lumey and van Poppel 2013.

undernourishment during the Dutch hunger winter did not have similar health-impairing effects as their parents had.[131] However, we should be careful not to draw to generalized conclusions on later-life health-effects.[132] Many of the above-mentioned diseases have a multitude of more-or-less credible causes. If someone suffers from asthma or cardiovascular disease it would be far-fetched to try to pinpoint the cause of it to a potential prenatal episode of starvation. The likelihood that it is related to some other triggering cause is much higher.

My summarizing conclusion drawn from the health-effect studies is that undernourishment and diseases had a major impact on those who lived and died during the period. Additionally, it had a limited impact on the generation that were the children of famine, or were born during the famine, granted that we can somehow account for the selection problem, which future anthropometric studies will hopefully clarify in more in detail. However, the famine had no direct biologically verifiable health effect on those born after it. This last generation undoubtedly experienced many indirect effects, such as coping and caring for themselves and their parents, who likely suffered from mental and physical health problems and a number of other difficulties that accompany social issues such as inherited poverty, dislocation, and cultural and social stigma, which in themselves may have had other lasting health effects. Importantly, there is no single causal process by which poverty effects child development.[133] There are instead multiple causes, and many of these may be regarded as cultural or socio-economic impacts. They are mainly learned or socialized impacts, and not biologically inherited. However, to make such a distinction can be easier in the study of an individual, but the individual experience does not easily lend itself to extrapolation to communities.

Here is where the simple categorization stops. On a national level, we cannot generalize the generational impact from famine without compartmentalizing the local and family variations in bodily sufferings, i.e. did the family suffer from undernourishment or some other disease or both, for how long - and does it matter? Does it matter whether the shock begins with losing a family member, parent, grandparent or sibling, or with the onset of undernourishment, or by entering a workhouse and falling prey to typhus or the effects of improper food, or several or all of these? Viewed from a psycho-physiological perspective it probably should matter:[134] How can we diagnose a trauma if we do not know the initial shock that caused it? It has been shown that the loss of a parent during childhood increases the risk of premature death through cardiovascular disease and suicide.[135] However, what is less

[131] Veenendal et al. 2013.

[132] Compare to Wheatcroft and Ó Gráda 2017, 263-267.

[133] Aber, Jones and Cohen 2005, 124.

[134] For a discussion see Rostila 2015, 190-192.

[135] Hollingshaus and Smith 2015, 181-189.

straightforward is the historical context of that loss, the role played by direct physiological trauma, or the effect of the socioeconomic shock caused by the loss of a parent, irrespective or in addition to that shock. For example, death from cardiovascular disease can be a symptom of a shared genetic risk factor between parents and children, rather than a bereavement effect.[136] However, the risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease also has a number of other personal and habitual causes.[137] Health-effect studies have mainly focused on famine cases where mortality is clearly caused by undernourishment in a limited natural experiment (such as the Dutch Hunger winter 1944-45), where hygienic conditions were better and to a larger extent epidemic disease and migration could be kept in check. As van den Berg and Lindeboom contend, 'exposure to famine is not equivalent to exposure to a nutritional shortage.'[138] When considering mid-nineteenth century Ireland and Finland these lines are blurred extensively. The reason for this is that the source material, although rich in scope, is unreliable as to the actual causes of death,[139] anecdotal evidence is sparse and biased with survivor-hindsight, and often silent on how family-members psychologically experienced the loss of loved ones.[140]

In the end, as far as the effects of hunger and sickness are concerned, we may be certain that it did have both a short-term and long-term impact, especially regarding health, which then transformed into socio-economic effects as well. Nonetheless, such an assessment cannot be generalized to a whole country or to a whole generation, or an age-group within the country, because the social and micro-level experiences varied enormously, and because the causal link from hunger to sickness to death to childhood experience to health-problems in later life to other social and cultural influences to childbearing practices and so on is by no means a linear and straightforward process, but part of dynamic mnemohistoric system.

2.1.2 COPING WITH DEATH AND BODIES

In historical famines it is a typical feature found in death reports, if such sources are available, that contagious diseases outnumber starvations as

[136] Rostila 2015, 191.

[137] Mendis et al. 2011. I would be careful not to overstate the significance of similar or other epigenetic effects associated with intergenerational trauma. Most importantly, for the treatment of a patient suffering from cardiovascular disease or someone with a high propensity to suffer from that, what difference does it make even if the disease could be linked to previous generations hunger? The treatment still has to be planned according to what the patient can do in his or her own lifetime in the present and future. The past cannot be changed. Hunger in history cannot be physically alleviated.

[138] Van den Berg and Lindeboom 2016, 7.

[139] Voutilainen 2017.

[140] Oral history collections are the only sources where one can find such detailed descriptions, but they have other methodological problems and are not as such extendable to exemplify a phenomenon across the whole nation.

causes of death. However, there is not much of a point in juxtaposing diseases and starvation against each other, unless one has a particular bias to do so. The diseases would not have been so deadly if they were not affecting already hunger-weakened bodies, engaged in a constant search for the entitlement of food, combined with a general level of poverty that prevented resources from being directed towards investments in public and private healthcare (both immediate and long-term). Poverty, malnutrition, hunger, and the spread of epidemics is a self-enforcing cycle. In addition, death reports from historical periods of crisis are rarely as accurate as one would expect them to be in more normal times.[141]

Administrators during famines do have a tendency to report inaccurately, if they report at all. This may be due to a half-conscious choice to favour the preservation of their position, reputation, and status, or pure inability to report the causes of death as they ought to be. In Finland, the local priest was responsible for reporting the cause of death, but although he was an educated man, he was not a trained physician, neither according to contemporary standards nor certainly according to our present-day standards.[142] Furthermore, he was not even necessarily a witness at the time of a person dying, and often had to rely on second-hand information. Did he have the time and the effort to cross-check family member's accounts, especially when the number of deaths kept accumulating? In addition, during famine the priests are kept unusually busy, which may have influenced their reporting (it certainly affected their handwriting). Hunger as a cause of death, if common, could make one think about why those persons were not given food, which potentially could lead to many difficult ethical and political follow-up questions to anyone scrutinizing these reports. Finally, because the priest was supposed to be the spiritual and secular leader of his local community and received his payment through its taxation, reporting a high number of starvation to deaths within his flock would look much worse in the eyes of his superiors than just a killing epidemic.[143] On the other hand, casually reporting the current standard epidemic disease such as "typhus" ("tyfus" or "nervfeber"), and occasionally listing "unknown" or "weariness", could be read as less controversial,[144] especially if every other colleague did the same. In

[141] Ó Gráda 2009, 108-121; Hickey 1993, 901-903.

[142] Pitkänen 1993, 31-33; Soikkanen 1991.

[143] On the 18th century priest's need to balance their loyalty between their superiors and their congregation's interest, see Pulma 1985, 35-37. On a similar problem in Ireland, see Garvin 1981, 50.

[144] The record of deaths kept in Maxmo parish (in Finnish Maalahti) provides a good example of how a standardized reporting form and procedure in a time of crisis can turn into a mesmerizing attempt to keep track of who, when, and where someone has died, not to mention from what. The priest has reported every death that occurred within his parish, but has later received information about those who have died elsewhere, and added these persons some pages later in his report. Furthermore, it includes some obvious mistakes, e.g. where a person has been listed as dead, but at some point has been written over, which raises the question of what really happened to that person. Clearly, the table must have confused

other words, a local priest or some other loyal government administrator had all the reasons in the world, even aside from pure disinterest and numbness, to report diseases and not starvation as the main killer in his parish.[145]

The situation with the Irish records of famine deaths is similar, in that they too record a much higher proportion of deaths caused by epidemics and diseases than actual starvation.[146] So, should we not think that this is normal during famines? Yes, but a closer look at the death records from West Cork, scrutinized by Patrick Hickey, shows that death from starvation, even if only a minority of total deaths, did account for one third of the region's in 1846-47.[147] So the Irish priest, after all, seems to have had much less of a difficulty in acknowledging starvation as causing death than his Finnish colleague. The context of a historically penalized, demoralized, and financially weak Roman Catholic church, in a seemingly unsupportive Protestant state, could partially explain the Irish priests' propensity to exaggerate, or at least not underestimate, the number of starvations. With this context in mind, it is worth considering the different political and rhetorical meanings that are inherent to concepts such as hunger versus disease, famine versus dearth, and the type of actions and the level of urgency they seem to imply. In the Irish case, reporting starvation could be seen as one way of further politicizing the crisis, as crying for help and calling for more active involvement from the state.[148]

Because mortality rates increase during famines, it means that the number of individuals dealing and coping with death and loss are multiplied. It becomes a psychological burden, but also a practical burden: what should be done with all the corpses, for example?[149] How individuals psychologically cope with such issues varies from one individual to the other, and the extent to which they are obliged to do so too. An encounter with death is different for a gravedigger, an urban shopkeeper, and an unemployed farm worker's family.

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the priest himself, which can be detected by the end of each year's summary of the total number of male and female deaths. For the year 1868, he had at some point corrected his calculation from 294 to 295. "Döda 15~~-4~~.5. mankön, 140. qvink., summa 29~~-4~~.5." Maxmo församlings arkiv, Längder över döda och begravda 1797-1871,144-145 http://sv.digihakemisto.appspot.com/edit?kuid=5406369&kuvanumero=76&ay=1615976&sartun=108943.KA&atun=165435.KA&amnimeke=Maxmo+f%C3%B6rsamlings+arkiv&sarnimi=L%C3%A4ngder+%C3%B6ver+d%C3%B6da+och+begravda&aynimi=L%C3%A4ngder+%C3%B6ver+d%C3%B6da+och+begravda+1797-1871+%28IF%3A2%29&ay2=102186 (last visited 21.9.2018).

[145] Voutilainen 2017, 54. See also Juustila 1965, 62; and Jussila 2018, 259. Scepticism about the accuracy of death reports can be found already in contemporary accounts, for example Reijonen 1905, 9; Päiwärinta 1893, 20. On a similar issue from Sweden, see Västerbro 2018, 303.

[146] Ó Gráda 2009, 118-120.

[147] Hickey 1993, 901-903.

[148] Edkins 2000; De Waal 2005, 29-32.

[149] On Finnish burial practices, see Pentikäinen 1990, 69-81.

Momentarily, apathy and a focus on one's own survival through disease and hardship certainly gave rise to a growing amount of social indifference.[150] As a result, some could be traumatized, but the majority of a population subject to potentially traumatic events are quite resilient, as psychological studies suggest.[151] Age also seems to have an effect on how people deal with potentially traumatic events. Psychological resilience to loss seems to be much stronger among children and young adults than in adults.[152] This does not mean that people are not scarred for life, some physiologically and others psychologically as discussed above, but that there is no uniform concept of trauma that can be diagnosed for entire communities, if it is problematic even for individuals of different ages.[153]

The social effects of high mortality, nonetheless, include dealing with an unprecedentedly high number of sick, weak, and dead bodies, and that in itself is for most people a highly unpleasant thing to react to, even if the person in question is physiologically in perfect condition.[154] One retired bailiff from Northern Savo recalled in 1918 that the large amount of dead bodies had to be piled for storage before they could be buried in channel graves, which caused a lot of anxiety.[155] Imagine just the taking care of one family member, from deteriorating health to death to burial, and what kind of stress that involves. During the famines in Ireland and Finland, the grief and anxiety of many families was multiplied and experienced as recurring events over a short time. We can note that death, and especially the loss of children, was so common (in Finland infancy death-rates were around 15-25 percent prior to the famine) that perhaps it would have been psychologically a lesser shock for them than it is for us nowadays. Perhaps, but I wonder if it is feasible to hypothesize

[150] Pitkänen 1991a, 207-212.

[151] Mancini and Bonanno 2010.

[152] Luecken and Gress 2010, 238-257.

[153] Carlson and Dalenberg 2000, 4-28.

[154] Peculiarly, in Finnish the mundane and slightly ironic statement of a momentarily intense hunger felt by oneself is "nähdä nälkää", literally 'to see hunger'. One wonders how you can actually see, or visualize, your own hunger? You can see an empty food pantry, and thus anticipate a forthcoming intense hunger, that is for sure. Nevertheless, it is quite a metaphorical leap that one has to perform: from experiencing hunger to seeing hunger. I wonder if the expression originates from a literal reading of it? That originally it was not even meant as a metaphor, but sprung from the idea of empathy and the effect of seeing others starving? Seeing starvation, but not being able to do anything about it, can also be considered as one form of intense psychological burden. Seeing becomes a feeling. The immersed feeling of guilt, as an intense extension of empathy taking shape in a psycho-somatic diagnosis applied to oneself. This is the only reason that I can come to think of. And in a post-famine scenario, it would certainly ease the survival guilt that one potentially felt if one could convince oneself that "I" suffered too. In other words, it seems appropriate to assume that the expression "nähdä nälkää" was widely and literally experienced as literally "seeing hunger" in others, and came to have an altered meaning towards an individual appropriation of hunger during the mnemohistorical period.

[155] Ollinniemi, R, SHS.33.1.

around a historical scale of grief and apathy from the 1840s to the 2010s, when we have no primary sources that could help us to construct even an approximate scale? I doubt it, and therefore I suggest that the loss of loved ones can always be assumed to cause grief to some extent.[156] In addition, the infancy death rate during the famines was unusually high (in Finland in 1868 39,2 percent), as was the death rate even in the age groups that traditionally would have been considered to be less vulnerable, i.e. among adults. Not only were temporary hospitals set up, but new burial grounds also had to be established ad hoc, because no parish or workhouse institution was prepared to deal with so many corpses in such a short time.[157] This means that a major famine demands a social response that leaves physical remains in the landscape. Relief work sites are the most visible examples of these responses, but for contemporaries they are often a sign of hope in the midst of misery, while mass burial grounds were sites of anxiety and grief, and even a way of othering famine victims.[158]

During the famines, cemeteries had to be enlarged or new ones opened. This came with a price-tag, of course. In 1867, Orivesi parish, in Pirkanmaa, received permission from the Senate to sell 100 barrels of grain from its granary stock to collect funds for enlarging its cemetery, among a number of other expenses. In practice what this meant was that the parish facilitated a circumstance where those with enough credit or money to buy food could do so, while those who could not afford the food were provided with graves.[159] These came in handy the following year, when Orivesi's mortality rate quadrupled from the levels of 1866 and 1867, reaching the 13th highest mortality rate (16,9 %, 832 in absolute numbers) in the country.[160] Some consolation can be found in that at least it was a communal decision, and provided something to everyone.

The meticulously kept tables of death in each parish recorded virtually every parish member who died, but the exact location of their final resting places are unknown for the clear majority of cases. Local folklore from Lappajärvi, Ostrobothnia, recalls that under one boat shelter in the churchyard there lies buried some anonymous victims of poverty, possibly from the famine years; but without proper bio-archeological examinations we may never know for certain.[161] Oftentimes, the mass burials of non-local residents or otherwise socially deviant persons took place somewhere further away from the churchyard. This was typical around the larger construction sites, but also in towns where beggars were passing through but died on their way.

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[156] On a similar note, see Västerbro 2018, 184-186.

[157] Geber 2015.

[158] Mark-Fitzgerald 2013, 102-107.

[159] Sanomia Turusta 3.5.1867.

[160] Turpeinen 1986, 105, 261.

[161] The local sexton told me this story on my visit to Lappajärvi churchyard on the 10th of June 2018.

Some localities were more welcoming to wandering beggars than others, but almost every local community made a distinction between ours and theirs,[162] especially when it concerned burial costs. Santeri Alkio's notion that 'entombment did not distinguish between social class'[163] may have been true in some individual cases, but it is not supported by the material evidence of propertied family graves on the one hand and anonymous mass graves on the other, as was the case across the country, in addition to other folklore sources.[164] Kiuruvesi in Northern Savonia has a mass burial ground with a large stone-pyramid memorial attached to it (dated from 1955). The site is clearly separated from its own churchyard by approximately one kilometer.[165] When I was searching for the memorial I was perplexed by the notion that famine victims had been buried so far from the church.[166] A partial answer to this can be gleaned from local folklore, which recalls that 1200 victims lies buried on the spot, out of which only 500 are said to be local Kiuruvesi residents.[167] Perhaps the burial ground was initially planned for non-residents, which would explain its distance from the main cemetery, but as deaths kept piling up even the local residents received their last resting place there. However, in the years 1867 to 1868 a total of 823 Kiuruvesi residents perished, and if the local folklore has the numbers even narrowly correct it would mean that not all of the Kiuruvesi residents that died during those years could have been buried there. Some kind of selection must have taken place. Approximately three hundred had to be buried elsewhere, presumably in individual or family pits nearer to the church? According to Mauri Leinonen, who studied the Kiuruvesi parish death records, the number of deceased freeholding farmers (at the top of the peasant social hierarchy) in those years was little less than 270-280. If we add the elderly who were living on the farms on retirement contracts ("syytinki"), the total of these groups together makes approximately 320 deaths.[168] It is probable, although it would need a local microstudy to confirm it, that these three-hundred members of the freeholding peasantry were buried near the main church, while the rest of the landless victims, in total around 500, were buried alongside those c. 700 other anonymous victims from adjacent parishes. This would explain the odd figures

[162] This is also repeated in folklore sources. See e.g. Kuortane, Vesala Arvo, EPO 1119.

[163] Alkio 1885, 40; see also Jussila 2018, 248.

[164] Especially Nevala 2015, 66–68.

[165] Also the famine cemetery in Lehtimäki is disconnected one or two kilometres from the parish church-yard.

[166] Clearly, I am not the only perplexed about this. See Andrew Newby's blog Katovuodet 1860 https://katovuodet1860.wordpress.com/2018/07/31/kiuruvesi/ (last visited 18.5.2019).

[167] Leinonen 2008, 29; Kiuruvesi municipality website: https://www.kiuruvesi.fi/Suomeksi/Palvelut/Matkailu/Nahtavyydet/Nalkaan-kuolleiden-muistomerkki (last visited 18.5.2019).

[168] Leinonen 2008, 27.

concerning the Kiuruvesi mass burial, and it would be congruent with the peasant community's social stratification.

In in the infamous Skibbereen, Ireland, the local workhouse had to open two additional burial grounds after Abbestrewery cemetery was filled with over 8.000-10.000 people.[169] Nevertheless, the mere logistics of the allocation of space and resources for these burials and other associated practicalities cannot have gone unnoticed within the local communities, nor without causing any debate or controversy.

The sick had to be taken care of, often with insufficient resources, and the dead had to be removed from their deathbed and given a burial, and so forth.[170] In times of crises priests have been key figures within their communities to administer such issues.[171] How they went about dealing with these deaths on a practical level, for example shifting from individual burials to mass burials, claiming the property for hospitals and new burial sites, contracting staff to take care of the workload, organizing the associated social responsibilities, and how the local community in response would have reacted to these measures, is also a matter that varied from one locality to another. We may assume that it did not always happen without causing any social or local frictions.[172] Pitkänen has noted how oral history from Haapavesi recalls that in 1868 the tolling of the death bells was constant.[173] A. M. Sullivan reports that from 1877 one visible impact of the Irish Famine was the decline and disappearance of funerals, which used to be great display in Irish society, but the sheer amount of everyday encounters with corpses, coffins, and burials turned funerals into something banal.[174] What is quite certain is that not even burials were devoid of class distinctions, although this aspect has rarely been given much consideration in the Finnish case. In Ireland, too, the myth of 'sliding coffins' used during the famine has been a recurring and somewhat disturbing trope in famine narratives, as a case in point.[175] Social class remained even after the person had left their body.

Nonetheless, a large amount of difficult and unpleasant issues had to be resolved, which probably caused anxiety and suffering of all types.[176] The small Swedish-speaking coastal parish of Maxmo in Ostrobothnia saw its number of deaths rise from a normal fluctuation of 40 to 60 per year, in the years 1861 to

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[169] See also Mark-Fitzgerald 2013, 141-147.

[170] On the history of Finnish social security see Pulma 1994, 15-70; Häkkinen and Peltola 2005

[171] Soikkanen 1991.

[172] Edkins 2000, 38-39.

[173] Pitkänen 1991a, 208.

[174] Sullivan 1878[1877], 61.

[175] I call it a myth because the custom to bury the poor through a sliding coffin in order to save money may not have been as widespread as the folklore would have us believe. Bioarcheologist Jonny Geber, who examined the nearly 1000 corpses from the Kilkenny Union Workhouse burials, discovered that nearly every corpse had a coffin for themselves. Geber 2015, 54.

[176] Soikkanen 1991.

1865, to an astonishing 295 in 1868.[177] That is not the highest number of burials that a priest had to deal with (it is still less than one in a day). However, that is a six-fold increase in the amount of burials that the local priest had to oversee, compared to normal times.[178] He had to completely re-invent his working schedule and engage with his local society in a new manner in order to get his preliminary tasks done. The amount and severity of such stress is hard to measure, but suffice to say that it was not an easy task.

2.1.3 MIGRATION

Thirdly, in times of famine migration tends to rise. Whether it is emigration, internal migration, or an intensification of regular and temporary migration depends on the context, but the fact that people are lacking food, or income that can be exchanged for food, within an affected area makes them more willing to go and search for those things elsewhere. For the society as a whole, migration is a crude form of disaster relief during times of distress, because it reduces the pressure on the scarcity of food where the crisis is the severest.[179] It can be and often is a lifesaving strategy for the individuals too, in the sense that it is the best of the bad options available. For the Irish emigrants, withstanding the infamous coffin ships, the mass majority of the circa one million emigrants probably had a better chance of survival in their new country than they would have had in Ireland, and it almost certainly reduced the already strained pressure on the Irish workhouses.

Having said that, it does not mean that choosing to migrate or being forced to migrate - the distinction is not always so evident[180] - would not be without its risks.[181] During times of crisis, migration also facilitates the spread of diseases,[182] which in conditions where resources (food, medicines, and adequate space) are inadequate (at certain 'social bottlenecks', i.e. relief points, workhouses, worksites, transit areas, passenger ships, dispensaries, and so on) gives rise to unhygienic environments and the spread of killing epidemics, where they otherwise would not have erupted. Thus some scholars prefer to distinguish famine mortality primarily as a feature of a healthcare crisis.[183] The one million or more Irish famine emigrants were followed by

[177] Maxmo församlings arkiv, Längder över döda och begravda 1797-1871, 144-145.

[178] The total population of Maxmo at the end of 1868 was a little less than 1600, which goes to show what an extraordinary, sad, perplexing, and busy year it must have been for the local priest and the whole community.

[179] Ó Gráda 2009, 81-89; Ó Gráda and O'Rourke 2006, 121-142.

[180] E.g. Woodward 2006. Also, in Finland during the famine the number of convicts sent to Siberia nearly doubled. Juntunen 1983, 52.

[181] As an explicit example, the Chinese famine of 1959-62 can be mentioned, and the forced removal of agricultural labour in the countryside to the industrial sites. Ó Gráda 2009, 242-243.

[182] Ó Gráda 2009, 84; Pitkänen 1992, 108; Pitkänen 1991a, 220-222.

[183] De Waal 2005, 188.

higher mortality rates in Liverpool, Glasgow, New York, Montreal, and elsewhere.[184] The unprecedented wave of emigration from Ireland that was launched by the Famine and continued to 1921 was massive and sustained.[185] In the Finnish famine [see article I] many of the internal migrants, an estimated 100,000 individuals at its peak, because of their concentration in certain locations, most certainly contributed to the spreading of diseases and thus the spread of higher mortality geographically.[186] This sad process probably ended up killing the migrants themselves sooner or later. But, unlike the Finnish internal migrants, most of the Irish famine emigrants did actually survive their ocean crossings and succeeded in building a new life abroad.[187]

While it is evident that the Irish Famine intensified overseas emigration and the Finnish famine resulted in internal migration, and only to a very small degree emigration [see article I], the question that sometimes rises is: why did the Finns not emigrate?[188] The case of Sweden's "famine" of 1867-69[189] and its clear coincidence with the expansion of Swedish emigration seems like an example that the Finns should have followed, but for some reason they did not.[190] Why? Well, first we must consider the context of available means of passage. Finnish overseas passenger traffic was limited to summer seasons because the Baltic freezes during the winter. Sweden, on the other hand, had open ports throughout the whole year in the southern parts of the country, and bordering the Atlantic (Gothenburg). Secondly, this availability of passage all year round probably made passenger traffic much cheaper than was the case in Finland. Thirdly, a closer look into the regional origin of the Swedish emigrants points to the southern parts of the country, while northern Sweden, which in terms of climate, harvest failure, and famine severity more closely resembled the conditions of Finland, provided a much smaller share of the emigrants.[191] Fourthly, we must also consider which borders were open for migration, assuming the mode of transport and its cost could be overcome. Since 1866 the passage to Sweden from Finland would have required a passport and a permit, and was strongly discouraged by the officials as Sweden was struggling with its own poor.[192] And finally, in Ireland many landlords, and even the state to some limited degree, supported emigration financially,

[184] Ó Gráda 2009, 87-88; Kenny 2017.

[185] Kenny 2017.

[186] Pitkänen 1992, 108.

[187] Ó Gráda and O'Rourke 2006, 122.

[188] See also Newby 2104a.

[189] Västerbro 2018.

[190] See also Akenson 2011; Ó Gráda and O'Rourke 2006.

[191] Carlson 1961[1980], 368; Nelson 1988, 110-114.

[192] Turpeinen 1986, 13-18.

ideologically, and practically.[193] In Finland there was no such encouragement, but rather the opposite.[194]

The communities on the receiving end of emigration, irrespective of whether it is a neighbouring parish or another state, often applies some measures to control and contain an arriving population associated with the spread of diseases and other kinds of unwanted social effects or behaviour.[195] A temporary incarceration of a large number of people can be accomplished in many ways, but is rarely done without any resentment, anger, or grief on behalf of the target group.[196] In addition, for the migrants themselves, depending on the context, the journey itself was not without danger. Furthermore, because a migrant is often reduced to the status of destitute, poor, foreign, and dependent on the goodwill of others, it makes him or her a prominent target of dehumanizing behaviour: human trafficking, fraud, robbery, etc. Consequently, there is a great amount of uncertainty, fear of danger, and real danger that comes along with the decision to migrate. And any unfortunate occurrence, such as a minor injury, can become life-threatening, and thus give rise to a potentially traumatic event.

Making such a journey is something extraordinary, exciting and memorable. On the other hand, it can become a struggle for survival too, in which case it increases the propensity to become associated with a potentially traumatic event. This double-edged memorability, its positive and negative sides, makes such travelling immensely salient in a life-course. If a historical period or event is experienced through migration it easily becomes more tangible for the individual's life-story, because the social world intrudes on and affects individual life decisions. This is quite evident in the Irish-American mnemohistory, for which the Famine constitutes a 'charter-myth' that helps to explain why they are where they are, and why their ancestors left Ireland.[197]

In many works which have become longstanding classics of Finnish literature, the famine forms a similar epic or watershed-event, although the element of (e)migration is less pronounced for historically understandable reasons. For instance, the main character in Väinö Linna's trilogy *Under the North Star*, the tenant farmer Jussi Koskela, is a famine orphan originally from another place. In Frans Emil Sillanpää's *Meek Heritage,* the main character's (Juha Toivola) drunk father dies during the famine, which sets him onto the road wandering. He character of Pekka in Toivo Pekkanen's *Aamuhämärä* escapes his humiliating life in a rural community and starts a new life in the modern, hard, but just town of Kotka, where success is based

[193] Moran 2016.

[194] Engman 2016b, 61-65.

[195] Keen 2008, 122-123; Pitkänen 1992, 108-13.

[196] EPO 1119, Laihia: Jyrkänne, Herm. S. 1853, recorded 1915.

[197] O'Neill 2001, 118; Kelly 2014.

on hard work and personal merits.[198] In other words, novelists have recognized the famine's potential as a watershed plot structure.

2.1.4 SOCIAL DISLOCATION, THE BREAK-UP OF FAMILY AND COMMUNAL TIES

Famine causes wide-scale disruption in people's organization of their daily lives. For many people it manifests as a loss of their ordinary source of income, may that be food from subsistence farming or the loss of a job, or for a family through the loss of the primary breadwinner. Nonetheless, this forces individuals and families to suddenly, and often unexpectedly, seek other means of income or food and shelter. How will they do it, and what kind difficulties does that transition involve?

There is no universal pattern here. The coping strategies differ widely depending on the context, social origins, cultural traits, norms and legal boundaries, gender roles, and other factors, but some typical categories can be mentioned. One is the previously discussed migration: to look for work or income elsewhere. Often only a part of the family will leave, while others will stay put, or leave at a later stage. A change of circumstances may affect individual decision-making. What originally was planned as temporary migration might lead to a permanent status, or vice versa. Different members within a family will have different personalized assets and skills that they will try to capitalize on: in 1867, the seven years old Johan August Aitamurto wandered and begged with his mother in southwestern Finland. Reportedly the boy had a talent for singing, which provided them with decent alms and 'proper bread' in most houses they visited. In one house, two unmarried women offered to take the young boy into their care, but the boy refused to be separated from his mother.[199] Later, the boy received a formal folk school education, and became a farmer, a teacher, and a Member of Parliament.[200] Nonetheless, most wandering beggars were not so fortunate.

The majority of emigrants usually consist of young adults that have better health and relatively more secure future prospects, and therefore, if less cash then at least a better credit-rating. Other forms of social dislocation may include children taken into municipal custody and "sold" to a household to be raised,[201] children sent begging elsewhere or to seek employment in a factory while the parents would search for work elsewhere, prostitution becomes more common, grandparents could be sent to poorhouses or people simply disappear, planned marriages are postponed, and as small children become a

[198] Häkkinen 1991b, 267.

[199] Johan August Aitamurto's autobiography.

[200] Kansallisen kokoomuksen keskusarkisto, 'Johan August Aitamurto': https://arkisto.kokoomus.net/kokoomusbiografia/elamakerta-artikkelit/aitamurto-johan-august-juho/ (last visited 26.5.2019).

[201] Halmekoski 2011.

burden infanticide becomes more common, as well as forms of slavery.[202] Within families, resources are seldom shared on an equal and fair basis, especially during times of scarcity.[203] This whole processes breaks up families at a pace faster than anyone has ever planned, while individual survival strategies become more and more pronounced.[204] In Ireland, the workhouses had a notorious reputation for their separation of family members, with their thick stone walls: husbands from wives and children from parents. But that is only one form of family break-up, although highly visible, but not necessarily even the last one; because the families could decide, at least in theory, to leave the workhouse and reunite.

Another development that often takes place during famines are changes in the legal and practical possessions of landholdings and other entitlements. Some people will gain more possessions, and others will lose their possessions. Farms go bankrupt, former owners are removed and new owners settle in. Some people leave their dwellings voluntarily, and others are evicted by force. Some families will be able to take advantage of the cheap labour made available by the crisis, while others suffer the consequences of it. In David Arnold's words, "Food is power"; famine relief is political and altruism manifests relations of power.[205] Some households will open their doors, while other will keep theirs locked. The perceptions of inequality and social classes becomes visible and pronounced, but not necessarily politicized into organized resistance. However, certain professions and social classes, such as bakers, merchants, and landlords, often become the target of localized moral outrage that sometimes erupts into violent forms.

Therefore, trust in the social cohesion of the community is under heavy stress, and fear over its possible breakup may give rise to measures that try to ameliorate that stress, or safeguard it against violent and criminal activity.[206] Poverty and unemployment become framed as social problems that need to be contained, coerced, and controlled. In the nineteenth century, the proper work ethic was instilled by directing the affected population into workhouses.[207] In addition, criminal activity usually increases during famines, and during the

[202] Ó Gráda 2009, 56-68; Arnold 1988, 80-86.

[203] Harriss 1990.

[204] See also Västerbro 2018, 215-246.

[205] Arnold 1988, 119-142.

[206] It is often assumed that cohesion among a group members would be reinforced in times of scarcity (E.g Siltala 2014). However, the evidence from looking at famines does not support that assumption. Sometimes cohesion is strengthened, and sometimes it is not. It is true that on many occasions dependency on other individuals become more important, but so does selfishness. In terms of cohesion rhetoric: selfishness that includes core family members but excludes grandparents, cousins, or half-siblings can easily be recast into a defence of goodwill and family values. A critical analysis of cohesion demands a critical examination of the definitions of social identity.

[207] Pulma 1999[1990], 168-176 Nally 2011.

Finnish famine especially crimes on property rose significantly.[208] This indicates that the risk of becoming robbed were higher than normal, and in times of general scarcity the consequences of becoming a victim of theft could also be more costly if, for example, one's meagre foodstuffs were robbed, as it forms an existential threat to one's life. The extent to which individuals' desperation results in organized resistance, or self-protection, or even an organized political movement varies in each context. Either way, fear and distrust between families and within families causes tension in local communities.

Bandits and criminals become more common during famines, and some receive more publicity and support from local populations, and greater interest from the authorities. Control and punishments are increased. In times of crisis, state authorities tend to sharpen control and surveillance, if they have the capacity to do so, which may partially explain (but only partially) the rise in crime statistics.[209] As thefts due poverty increased, the criminals seldom had any property to pay their fines, and therefore punishments were often transformed into corporal punishment, e.g. in Finland the convict was tied to a tree and received a number of birch branch lashes on his or her back.[210] We can be certain that this punishment occurred more often during the famine.[211] The Finnish saying "repiä kansan selkänahasta" (to rip the skin [for profit-making] from the people's back), which in the twentieth century is associated with working-class sentiment opposed to capitalistic profiteering,[212] probably carries an intensified cultural legacy from the famine years.[213]

During famines new temporary allegiances emerge that disrupt the ethical norms of society; for example, through the prominence of "social bandits",[214]

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[208] Vuorela 2017, 119–150; Häkkinen 1991a, 185; Woodward 2006; Ó Gráda 2009, 52–56. Property crimes also rose in Sweden, Västerbro 2018, 232-238.

[209] Häkkinen 1987.

[210] In Rautalampi, in central Finland, one such pine tree is preserved and commemorated as "piiskauspetäjä" [pine tree for whippings], but in the nineteenth century similar trees, poles or places could be found in every parish. Rautalampi municipality website: https://www.rautalampi.fi/koe-ja-nae/nahtavyydet/ (last visited 18.5.2019).

[211] See also, local memory in Virtaranta 1947, 66.

[212] E.g. SAK's leader Lauri Lyly in 2015 according to Turun Sanomat https://www.ts.fi/uutiset/kotimaa/765236/SAKn+Lylyn+mielesta+yhteiskuntasopimusta+ei+saa+repia+tyontekijan+selkanahasta (last visited 7.10.2019).

[213] The Finnish language contains many other similar proverbs: 'Rikas pääsee rahallaan, köyhä selkänahallaan' ('The rich gets away with his money, the poor with his back-skin.') Lönnrot 1842, 413; 'Isot varkaat vaunuissa ajavat, pienet paalussa piestään' (Big thiefs ride in cars, small thiefs receive a beating on the post), 'Pientä rosvoa kuritetaan, isoa rosvoa kumarretaan' (A small thief gets a beating, the big thief receives a bow'), 'Rahalla laitkin kumotaan' ('Money revokes the laws'), 'Älä varasta, taikka pannaan tolppaa halaamaan.' ('Do not steal, or you will be forced to embrace the pole'), Vuorela 1979, 141-149. See also Simonsuuri 1951, 181-184.

[214] Hobsbawm 1985.

for whom some households provide protection, either out of fear or self-interest. In pre-Famine Ireland such networks had already been established through proto-political and violent secret societies such as Whiteboyism, Ribbonism, and Molly Maguires, which re-emerged during the Famine in the authorities' surveillance reports as 'agrarian outrages'.[215] Even if the level of organization in Finland was not nearly on the same level as in Ireland, the rise of some famous villains and their coincidence with the famine is not surprising, but a common trend during famines.[216] In Finland, Tero Toivanen has interpreted the Kives brothers' activity in Kainuu as a temporary form of social banditry that developed and withered away in a famine context.[217] And the famous Gabriel Sutki, who in folklore received a Robin Hood type of reputation, alongside with the Halli brothers, testify how social norms were brought into question and fear of violence became more widespread on behalf of all social classes. How individuals, groups, and the community as a whole confront with or sets aside these tensions, and the stress and the suffering that they symbolize, varies enormously, and depends on the context and individuals, but the important thing to recognize is that the tension was real, despite their seeming historical invisibility in master narratives. Migration, on the other, probably brings some kind of relief to a localized anger, in the sense that with the removal of the migrants one simultaneously removes their potential sense of injustice.[218]

Consequently, social identities are in transformation during famines, and have to be reconfigured after it. Trust and loyalty in established relationships, identity hierarchies, and norms are shaken and disturbed.[219] This creates a new opportunity for agents of identity politics that previously operated in the societal margins. Restoring faith in the community requires a new definition of what that community is. In other words, identity politics take centre stage, which includes a new demand for all type of stories that provide an explanation or context for the perceived ongoing social crisis (even if the crisis' mortality climax may have waned some time ago) [see articles II, IV, and V]. Hence, we have the historian's problem of detecting meaningful categories of contemporary identities and collective pursuits, due to the famine that disrupts whatever had previously been considered socially stable. Furthermore, viewed from our temporal present, whatever seems to be a stable and perhaps even banal characteristic now, such as national identity, was a much more heavily contested, ambiguous, and dynamic identity in the process of making [more on this in chapter 4]. Similarly, the increased migration, urbanization and industrialization during or in the aftermath of the famine testify to a vibrant challenge to previously held local, social, and religious

[215] Vaughan 1994, 138-176; Garvin 1981, 38-59; compare to Mac Suibhne 2017.

[216] Ó Gráda 2009, 52–56.

[217] Toivanen 2015.

[218] E.g. Åkerblom 1968, 135.

[219] Häkkinen and Peltola 2005, 41-45.

identities as well.[220] Whether there exists a causal connection between identity, migration, and famine is not the point here, but the recognition that identities are not stable, and that they transform during changes in situations and conflicts.[221] Suffice it to say here that we cannot use anachronistic and fixed identity categories in the study of fluid and historically changing identities of the past.

Nonetheless, as with any politics of identity, there comes a fair share of selective reference to the past: silencing, forgetting, and forgiving constitute human behaviours that are historically difficult to detect, because they do not impose themselves visibly in or on available historical sources. Attempts to restore faith in identity has to put possible grievances aside, and if these attempts are successful then the grievances are excluded from the narratives.[222] However, the distinction between being *silent* and being *silenced* is not always self-evident and easy to interpret.[223] It requires a deep contextual understanding. Jan Löfström has talked about "deep silence" to describe those phenomena that do not constitute a social or cultural issue and do not require a verbal formulation. Such silence can be of casual, mundane, or even relaxed nature, and does not need to be a result of repression.[224] To add further contextual complexities to the interpretation of silence, it can also be a communicative or shared silence (like in the Finnish expression "yhdessä vaikeneminen" [being silent together], where silence is decoded with meanings that those who are present can interpret, but for outsiders it only manifests as a silence. This is distinct from just being quiet.

These are social and contextual phenomena that are difficult to research, but nonetheless real and important feature of human communication and social life.[225] These are phenomena that are most visible through their seeming absence where we would otherwise assume to find them. To assume that people in the past would not have ordinary human emotions and reactions would also lead to a very unhistorical assessment. We can conclude that when the resources of life were scarce, scarcer than ordinary scarcity, the distribution of scarcity which took place within families and within local communities probably did not make everyone, everywhere happy; on the contrary, it probably made many people very angry, with subsequent chain reactions. However, if communities afterwards ever sought to reinforce a social identity, that anger had to be somehow resolved, forgotten, or whitewashed.[226]

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[220] E.g. King 2016.

[221] Burke and Stets 2009, 175-196.

[222] For example, Mac Suibhne 2017.

[223] Fivush 2010.

[224] Löfström 2015, 121.

[225] For a discussion see Häkkinen and Salasuo 2015, 9-17.

[226] For an excellent study on a local level see Mac Suibhne 2017.

2.1.5 IMPOVERISHMENT (AND GROWTH)

It is a fact too that on almost every measurable socio-economic standard both Finnish and Irish societies as a whole made huge improvements after the famines. GDP per capita rose, wages increased, industrialization and trade intensified, literacy and the level of education rose, sanitation services in urban centres improved, the agricultural sector increased productivity, and so forth.[227] Many of these developments would probably have taken place even without the famines, but as socioeconomic achievements they are easily perceived as much greater accomplishments in relation to the nadir created by the famines. This rags-to-riches plotline is as a very compelling narrative.[228] However, because the famines form such a momentous event in these societies, imagining the progress without the background of famine becomes nearly impossible. Naturally, some causal credit to the famines as an 'pivot or accelerator'[229] of social and economic development must be given, but what and how much is a broad and ongoing debate within both countries' scholarship.

Famine is an economic depression, and economic depressions make people poorer than they otherwise would be.[230] But that depression, and the following boom, does not reach out to every individual in equal proportion. What happens on the macro-level may manifests itself very differently on the microlevel.

Some lose all or parts of their harvest, some their jobs, some their assets, some their credit, their workforce, and in the longer run their overall capacity to invest in their own future or their children's future is therefore weakened.[231] It is hardly a controversial conclusion to draw from this that poverty has negative effects for children's socio-economic status in later life.[232] In addition, studies on the psychological effects of poverty have shown that 'poverty causes stress and negative affective states which in turn may lead to short-sighted and risk-averse decision-making, possibly by limiting attention and favoring habitual behaviors at the expense of goal-directed ones.'[233] An impoverished person loses, bit by bit, their sense of control of their own destiny.[234]

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[227] Ó Gráda 1995; Hjerppe and Jalava 2006.

[228] Zerubavel 2003, 14-15.

[229] Jackson 2010, 80; see also Soininen 1974, 409-410.

[230] For example, Sen and Drèze, 1991, 85-103.

[231] For a more recent study of this phenomenon, see Wu 2011. It is sometimes argued that the Finnish famine launched, or at least coincided, with the modernization of the Finnish economy. Yet it is evident that as far as higher cash incomes in rural areas were concerned these were not generated until several decades after the famine, through incomes from increased dairy production (Kuusterä 1997). See also Soininen 1974, 409-410.

[232] Lallukka et al. 2019; Cameron et al. 2018.

[233] Haushofer and Fehr 2014, 862.

[234] A fictional example of this is Juha Toivola, the main character in Frans Emil Sillanpää's *Meek Heritage*. Sillanpää 1919.

Impoverishment breeds a sense of humiliation and shame.[235] The sense of losing control and becoming more and more dependent on the goodwill of others contributes to a growing awareness of not only economic inequality but also of social and political inequality. It may be that the sense of control of one's own life-course is really just an illusion, but when hopes, dreams, and desires are dashed it will have an effect on the individual's will, and their physical and emotional capacity to plan and build their and their offspring's future.

For those suffering through a famine, impoverishment becomes a self-enforcing spiral in which the deeper one falls the more difficult it becomes to get up.[236] This will have the real economic effect of a worsening resource poverty, i.e. one is prevented from making the necessary improvements in holdings, in methods, in health, and in technologies that would potentially raise one's productivity and that would gradually lead to a betterment of the situation.[237] In addition, as poverty universally is stigmatized and induces a feeling of shame, it may lead to an increased concealment of one's precarious situation, isolation, or social exclusion, making it in turn even more difficult to seek help.[238] In other words, even if according to almost every socio-economic indicator the crisis may have passed, and may have been officially declared over in a particular location, on a household and individual level the lean years may have continued to be felt as if the crisis never had ended. For individuals, this may lead to an earlier death than otherwise would have been the case, even if such cases cannot be strictly verified as famine casualties. However, the literature of famine-related health effects does give reason to assume that these two famines also had a lag effect, despite the fact that their exact diagnosis, nature, and scale remains difficult to prove.[239]

In conclusion, this seeming paradox of progress/impoverishment is better grasped if we recognize that the progress of an individual is not necessarily the same as the progress of society, and vice versa. Some individuals disappear from the sources used by social scientists, through emigration and by dying, and therefore their views are often excluded from social surveys. In addition, a society contains within it many layers of sub-societies (regional and class) that can have completely different trajectories[see article I].[240] Furthermore, an individual's progress, or lack of it, is perceived according to the individual's own expectations, while the progress of society is perceived in hindsight according to the expectations held by social scientists. These are two very different modes of expectations.

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[235] Walker 2014.

[236] Weiss 2000, 166.

[237] Haushofer and Fehr 2014; Soininen 1974, 409-410.

[238] Walker 2014.

[239] See the discussion in this thesis on pages 35-38.

[240] Häkkinen 1999[1990], 114.

2.2 INTERPRETATIONS OF WHAT POLITICALLY CAUSED THE FAMINES

Do governments have a responsibility to prevent, to the best of their capability, mass famine mortality? The answer to this question may vary depending on a person's political ideology, but in terms of historical research we can accept that according to the contemporary standards and objectives of the governments in the 1840s in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and in the 1860s in Imperial Russia and Finland, the answer is affirmative.[241] This is the modern consensus in famine studies, as the discussion above has also shown.

The governments did perceive that they had an obligation to minimize the damage, and the evidence of this is that had they *not* perceived this as their moral responsibility then they would not have even initiated relief measures in the first place [see article III]. Thus, we can conclude that had they had the intention of performing a genocide, which there is no evidence of in the cases of Ireland and Finland,[242] then the governments failed miserably, because their relief measures, no matter how inadequate in practice, had the objective of saving lives, and many were saved as a result. However, the more poignant and serious questions that have come to the famine scholar's attention are: Did they do enough?[243] Did they utilize the best policy options available in their toolkit?[244] Did the government and/or officials sleepwalk into the crisis, and were they overwhelmed by the speed and scale of problems unfolding before them? Could they have been better prepared?[245] Did their pre-crisis policies contribute to increased vulnerability, and to what extent should the famine governments be held responsible for unintentional consequences of their or their predecessor's work?[246]

One critique that has been made against the governments of Finland and Ireland with regards to their famine response is their ideological attempts to instil the affected population with virtues that they were supposedly lacking, and the use of hunger as a persuasive tool to change behaviour and/or social customs. [247] A case in point is the propagation of a proper work ethic, as manifested in institutionalized workhouses, to counter laziness.[248] Another is the attempt to teach the affected population a lesson: the importance of self-

[241] Gray 1999, 331; Rantanen 2018.

[242] On Ireland see e.g. Jackson 2010, 79. In Finland genocide has never been suggested.

[243] Ó Gráda 2006c, 12–16.

[244] Rantanen 2018.

[245] Turpeinen 1986, 144-148.

[246] Mokyr 1983. Although Mokyr's perspective is limited to economics, and he does not discuss the role of political economies, his study is essential to that debate. See also Ó Gráda 2006c; Virrankoski 2012, 214.

[247] Siltala 1999, 167-172; Nally 2011; Whelan (Kevin) 1995, 28.

[248] Delaney 2012.

help or self-sufficiency (on a household, regional, as well as national level);[249] or replacing old economic, agricultural, and forestry methods, crops, and nutrition sources with new ones;[250] or the advantages of another religion;[251] or the damage inflicted by sin,[252] and so forth. These are examples of charges against the government for having used an ideologically inspired deliberate attempt to use carrot-and-stick methods in order to affect a behavioural change in the population. These examples of governmental behaviour-crafting efforts have also been pronounced in the academic historiography of these famines. The thing that makes these issues contentious is that they touch upon questions of identity, and on unpopular attempts to change identities in an inequal power-relation context, or what is sometimes termed an imperial-colonial context (especially for the Irish case).

On a more practical and day-to-day political level, the governments have also been criticized for having had other priorities, reacting too late and by too little, or making the wrong political choices [see article III], which are very typical charges levelled against any government in any matter, not just during famines, nor during famines in authoritarian regimes.[253] In Finland, Snellman's relief measures have been criticized for prioritizing the higher value of the Finnish currency (the Markka),[254] for dismissing harvest forecasts and reports, for postponing grain imports until it was already too late,[255] for hindering or proposing impractical and ill planned relief schemes,[256] and many others issues. The British government has an even longer list of suggested failures: too much *laissez-faire*,[257] too much emphasis on loans instead of direct handouts,[258] allowing grains to be exported [see article III], impractical relief schemes,[259] underfunding of poor law unions,[260] too much politicization of the crisis,[261] etc. In addition, both governments have been accused of emphasizing coercive methods ahead of progressive relief

[249] Rantanen 2018; Siltala 1999; Delaney 2012, 127.

[250] Whelan, (Kevin) 1995, 28; Rekonen 2018; Häkkinen 1991c; Feehan 2012; Crawford 1995; Delaney 2012, 96-116; Kuisma 1993, 221-227.

[251] Whelan, (Irene) 1995.

[252] Ferriter 2012, 17-26.

[253] Rubini 2009.

[254] Kuusterä 1987; Arola 2006, 132-137.

[255] Hirvonen 2017, 92-97; Rantanen 2018; Kunnas 2018.

[256] Turpeinen 1986, 144-224; Häkkinen 1991d.

[257] Woodham-Smith 1962, 410.

[258] Foster 1992 [1989], 166-167.

[259] O'Neill 1956, 220-221,228-234.

[260] Kinealy 2012, 92-95.

[261] Connolly 1995; Gray 1999.

policies,[262] for distracting the public with national fasts,[263] and repentance ceremonies,[264] and for placing too high expectations on voluntary charity.[265]

In summary, these famines have produced a variety of political interpretations on how the famine should have been handled, or at least how the government acted in the wrong way. Many of these accusations can be contested. My point with referencing them is not to take part in the blame game. Rather, the point is to underline that the politics of famine interpretation is part of a wide and ongoing debate. In other words, they were political famines, too.

[262] Smyth 2012d; Häkkinen 1987.

[263] Gray 2000.

[264] "Katumus- ja rukouspäivä joulukuun 8 päiwänä", in Oulun Wiikko-Sanomia 30.11.1867. See also Häkkinen 1991e, 239.

[265] Pitkänen 1991b; Kinealy 2013.

3 MNEMOHISTORY AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY

Mnemohistory is the study of the afterlife of events.[266] It is a trans- and multi-disciplinary field with a variety of names attached to it: cultural memory, historical culture, history of historiography, uses (and abuses) of history, cultural history, social memory, oral history, and collective memory. In this thesis I use mnemohistory as a subcategory of the umbrella-term of collective memory studies that encompasses all of the abovementioned strands.

Collective memory studies is a dynamic and a very lively field of academic inquiry, where consensus on key terminology and their meaning is still being debated and sought. However, a shared point of reference is the interest in studying memory as a social phenomenon, or how memory affects society and history, drawing inspiration from sociologist Maurice Halbwach's (1877-1945) theories on collective memory. Halbwach theorized around the social role memory plays for individuals and for communities. However, the multidisciplinary nature of the field (including sociologists, anthropologists, art historians, cultural historians, media researchers, educationalists, psychologists, folklorists, literary researchers, and many others) and the multivocality of its perspectives, which on the one hand can be seen as its strength, has also led to some confusion. For me, the challenge has been to find terminology that would accurately, or at least as accurately as possible, reflect different disciplinary, empirical, and theoretical perspectives in one coherent assessment of two geographically and historically separate cases. To complicate matters even further, this assessment should also take into account and engage with the cases' own linguistic and cultural contexts, and their scholarly discourses. Next, I will briefly discuss why the concept of mnemohistory is better adapted (in my opinion, though not necessarily the only possible one) to characterize my study of famines and their afterlife than several other conceptual alternatives.

3.1 WHY MNEMOHISTORY?

Originally proposed by Jan Assman, mnemohistory is a historical perspective that amalgamates historical writing with cultural memory, and Marek Tamm defines it as 'researching into the actuality, not into the factuality of the past',[267] and 'how particular ways of construing the past enable later communities to constitute and sustain themselves'.[268] According to Assman,

[266] Tamm 2015, 1-23.

[267] Tamm 2008, 501.

[268] Tamm 2008, 510.

'mnemohistory is reception theory applied to history: 'The past is not simply "received" by the present. The present is "haunted" by the past and the past is modelled, invented, reinvented, and reconstructed by the present.'[269] What is crucial is that neither memory nor history provide a direct path to the past; the past is irrevocably lost, and it can only be restored as a representation by the needs of the present.

However, these definitions only work as a mediocre general introduction to collective memory studies as a whole, and they do not appropriately distinguish how mnemohistory really differs from the other related concepts - social memory, cultural memory, collective memory, public history, historical memory, and historical culture - or why mnemohistory deserves to be recognized as a distinct category of analysis in the first place.[270] The terms are sometimes used interchangeably, and sometimes also with notable conceptual distinctions, which is not an ideal situation for academic discourse, and therefore I will try to refine my own conceptual orientation that I use within the broader field of collective memory studies. Indeed, Assman himself has not made a clear distinction between mnemohistory and his other contributions to the field, i.e. cultural memory.[271]

Nonetheless, my definition of mnemohistory is that period of time when people remember an event and people who remember and construct the history of that same event co-exist and overlap one another. This is approximately a ninety to one hundred years span after an event. It is the period when the remembering generation is slowly but surely being demographically replaced by the following generations, as shown in Figure 2. Mnemohistory ends when the last person who can remember the event dies.

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[269] Assman 1997, 9.

[270] For a good introduction to memory studies see Olick, Vinitsky-Seroussi and Levy 2011.

[271] For collective memory, Assman uses a fourfold typology: material memory (based on things), mimetic memory (based on imitation), communicative memory (based on oral discussion), and cultural memory (based on written and visual carriers of memory) (Assman 2011, 5-6). History proper has no place in this category, unless it is incorporated as a subcategory of cultural memory (Assman 2011, 29). My problem with this is that he substitutes the established historical (and primary source-led) scholarship to a subordinate and fluid category of memory. Then, he proposes mnemohistory as a "solution" to study the uses and reception of cultural memory (including history) within a culture. However, there are plenty of other conceptual candidates that could fulfil this analytical task: historical culture, historical memory, popular history, cultural history, uses of history, heritage studies, history, etc. In other words, he uses the shortcomings of his own very narrow definition of the historical profession to introduce a new concept, but he does not make any distinction between an individual's or even a group's proximity (primarily temporal but why not spatial too) to the past event, which is an issue that is of vital importance in determining the accuracy of a representation of the past within both clinical psychology and historical scholarship. Additionally, in terms of the reception and uses of past representations, it do matter whether the receiver believes the issue to be myth or a true representation of the past, and the negligence and watering down of this distinction represents a significant problem.

After this, the society is forced to utilize other sources or fragments preserved from the past in order to reconstruct and remember the event.

	Famine cohorts minimum age	Percentage of total population	Total number of famine generation
1870	5	**87,37**	1,545,300
1880	15	**65,39**	1,347,500
1890	25	**47,24**	1,124,300
1900	35	**33,46**	888,600
1910	45	**21,42**	630,600
1920	55	**12,76**	401,500
1930	65	**6,27**	217,200
1940	75	**1,99**	73,400
1950	85	**0,24**	9,500
1960	90	**0,0005**	2,300

Figure 2 Share of the Finnish population that could remember the famine. Source: *Suomen taloushistoria: historiallinen tilasto 3*, 1983.

The thing that is intriguing about Figures 2 and 3 is that they force us to ponder and question the relationship between life course analyses, societal events, and a specific age-group's influence (or dominance vs. subjugation) on the content in public discourses. It is a fact that the generation that experienced the famine years in proportional terms diminished in due time. However, in discourses on national history and identity or cultural memory this fact is rarely given much thought. These figures provoke the reader to consider what or how the meaning and effect the famines had in the later events. In the left corner (in red) I have listed a number of events, by no means an exclusive list and admittedly highly selective, but nonetheless a starting point for raising new questions: Where does the tipping point occur when the public realizes that the event deserves its own history? My suggestion is somewhere around the time when the "famine generation" is reduced to approximately fifty percent of the total population. Does it matter that the highly political generations that participated in the Home Rule movement in Ireland in the 1880s and 1890s, and the Civil War in 1918 in Finland, could be classified as the children of the famine years, or as the children of adult famine experiences? How should we approach and analyse the contextual significance of the folklore collections, when the Finnish texts include a much greater abundance of personal first-hand accounts, while the Irish texts are to a large extent one or two generations removed from the initial memory of the experience they narrate? How should scholars of mnemohistory assess the

significance of the realization that large scale and publicly highly visible commemorational activities mostly emerged only after the famine generation, i.e. the actual memory, was gone?

•	Famine cohorts minimum age	Percentage of total population	Total number
1851	0	**100**	6,552,385
1861	10	**77,49**	4,494,012
1871	20	**54,79**	2,965,474
1881	30	**38,53**	1,993,662
1891	40	**28,77**	1,353,699
1901	50	**19,31**	860,913
1911	60	**13,14**	576,789
1926	75	**RI: 2,97, NI: 2,47, I: 2,82**	RI: 88,222 + NI: 31,144 = 119,366 Ireland
1936/37*	85	**RI: 0,38, NI*: 0,33, I: 0,37**	RI: 11,505 + NI*: 4161 = 15,666 Ireland
1951	100	**RI: 0,0000101, NI: 0,0000095 I: 0,0000093**	RI:30 + NI: 13 = 43 Ireland

Rising 1867
The Land War
Home Rule Bills
National history education
Folklore collections

*) The census for the 1930s in Northern Ireland was conducted in 1937.

Figure 3 Share of the Irish population that could remember the Famine. Source: Vaughan and Fitzpatrick (*Irish Historical Statistics*) 1978, 78-81, 91-94, 98-100.

I have chosen to use the less common term mnemohistory instead of cultural, collective, social, or historical memory for the simple reason that it is less prone to be misunderstood, and it is much less burdened by the variety of meanings associated with the aforementioned alternatives. It enables me to critically interrogate a variety of key concepts of, and approaches to, the issue of how the past is represented in the present. Importantly, the concept provides me the freedom of defining it for myself, and slightly differently than Jan Assman does.

First of all, the advantage of mnemohistory is that it literally and distinctly incorporates memory (the Greek word *mnemo*) as well as history on an equal basis, and that it recognizes both the overlaps and the significant grey area of discourses that float somewhere between these two modes of reflection on the past. Mnemohistory is by definition an acknowledgement that memory and history are two different things, but that they are shaped by each other, and consequently it represents a concept that recognises, and through which we can analyse, that dynamic relationship. This is not a new perspective for historians of historiography, but it does provide a concept that acknowledges the distinction for broader audiences. It helps one to remember that a narrative about the famine, or about an episode during the famine, resonates with its intended audience in markedly different ways depending on what kind of experiences, memories, and expectations that the audience carries regarding their own lives. It is a reminder that there is a distinct difference

between an audience that can personally remember a period compared to an audience for whom that same period is only a historical abstraction, a story received from previous generations or from a history textbook.

An example of a personal relationship may serve to illustrate this point. When I question my grandmother (b. 1924) about the Second World War and her experience of that period, we approach the topic ontologically quite differently. She lived it, and her idea of that time is foremost shaped by her memories associated with that period. I, on the other hand, have only read about it, and my choice of readings determines what kind of questions I can ask her about it. Whatever emotions that I have about that period are more distant, more filtered through a variety of narratives, more about empathy for dear ones and their experiences than the direct experiences and personal memories that she has. She too has empathy for her dear ones from that period, but her empathy is constrained and balanced by her own personal experience rather than the different experiences and memories of others that belong to her generation, and this creates a world of difference between us. She has her memory, and I have my history of the same event, but when we discuss the event her memories and my history intermingle and shape one another.

Mnemohistory is inclusive of these two very different approaches towards a particular event, and it allows us to analyse how memory and history are approached in different ways by different individuals, despite their belonging to the same community in the same time. This difference in the meanings and resonance within an audience is easily lost when one leans too much on either memory or history. Mnemohistory incorporates them both.

Epistemologically, this is a sensible starting point for any historical investigation where the chosen period from the past includes a gradual shift from historical sources that are heavily shaped by memories to memories in the collective that have been influenced by the social environment, and includes some historical works. In this study we are concerned with a period of hundred years. That is the approximate time that it takes for a society to demographically renew itself, from the initial memory (created by the experience) of an event to replacing it with remembered narrations of that event. Hans-Georg Gadamer described the historical method's naiveté thusly: 'the permanent significance of something can first be known objectively only when it belongs to a closed context – in other words, when it is dead enough to have only historical interest.'[272] However, he added that 'real historical thinking must take account of its own historicity.'[273] In other words, the reality of the event and the reality of its understanding. Therefore, mnemohistory makes us ask: is there a difference, a transformation, a dynamic system that takes place between these two end-poles of reflections on the past? The interpretations and effects caused by an event are not some external

[272] Gadamer 2004 [1960], 297.

[273] Gadamer 2004 [1960], 299.

phenomena, but an extension of that event.[274] Mnemohistory incorporates these both, and studies their fluid interplay. For a hundred year period, where concepts such as event, extension, effect, experience, memory, and history are fluid, we need an analytical concept that can characterize and allows us to analyse these changes.

Secondly, the strength of mnemohistory to characterize this particular study is that it does not point towards any particular community's memory. In contrast, cultural or collective memory immediately raises the question of *whose* memory or history (in the case of historical culture) we are dealing with, and what it represents; or, then it is implicitly understood, and that is subjective to each reader, which is problematic in itself. The concept mnemohistory is helpful because it is open to further qualifications whenever the discussion changes from one community to another, and in my study it does change. It can, and indeed it should, be specified every time *whose* mnemohistory we are dealing with. Here I am not only concerned with Irish and Finnish mnemohistories in a nationally comparative sense, but also with all the subcommunities within the countries (e.g. generations, local communities, kinships, political affiliations) that are distinct in a spatial, temporal, and a cultural sense, but also entangle and intersect with each other. By shifting the discussion to a local commemoration or a political grouping it is implicitly understood to still contain the representational elements of both the memory and history of that unit. In other words, I can use it with a flexibility that would cause problems for the competing concepts.

3.2 CONCEPTUAL DISORIENTATIONS: THE PROBLEMS WITH 'COLLECTIVE MEMORY'

The reason why Halbwachs wrote about collective memory from the 1920s to the 1950s was that he had discovered,[275] as a sociologist and not as a psychologist, that an individual's memory was constructed and activated in interaction with the social surrounding.[276] For Halbwachs, the social discourses that the individual encounters are therefore one part of an individual's memory and their understanding of the collective. The social dimensions of memory have further been explored by psychologists, neuroscientists, and sociologists, although their methods and perspectives diverge radically from one to another. Nevertheless, according to Halbwachs, memory *is* collective by its nature, not that a collective has a memory in the literary sense. (i.e. the collective does not have a brain.) In his essay 'Individual

[274] Tamm 2015, 5; Gadamer 2004 [1960], 299.

[275] Halbwachs developed his notion of collective memory in the interwar years, and published *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* in 1952, which was rediscovered in 1992 through Lewis A. Coser's translation, under the title *On Collective Memory*. Halbwachs and Coser 1992 [1952].

[276] Olick, Vinitsky-Seroussi and Levy 2011; Halbwachs and Coser 1992.

Memory and Collective Memory' from *The Collective Memory* published in 1950, Halbwachs argued that without a collective or social interaction, there can be no individual memory whatsoever.[277] In other words, according to Halbwachs memory is embedded in a collective or a social framework.

Unfortunately, much of the subsequent literature on 'collective memory' does not follow Halbwachs' definition of memory, but instead discusses the memory of the collective. The problem lays in the fact, as pinpointed by Angelika Bammer's commentary 'Can We Talk? Neuroscientists and Humanists on Memory', that neuroscientists approach memory only in the individual, because this is where the neural system is located, and the notion of its collective dimensions are more or less understood as a matter of 'history'.[278] Some practitioners within memory studies recognize this dilemma, when the threshold between the individual and the collective is crossed in a study without any adjustments in empirical method or analytical terminology.[279] Professional historians, on the other hand, often have a more nuanced approach to what history and historiography (the history of the writing of history) is, and how it relates to other knowledge systems concerning the past. For historians, memory as an object of study seems to be associated with either source-critical challenges in studying oral history[280] or folklore studies, or the sociologically oriented study of traditions, commemorations, and the consumption of past events in the public domain, in which case it is often labelled as historical culture, history of mentalities, or public or popular history.[281] Thus, for an historian to speak of collective memory can often be confusing: what does it refer to, and/or is it used as substitute for history? If so, then why, and if not, then what does 'collective memory' describe that [individual] memory cannot describe? Historian David Lowenthal (1923-2018) questioned the sharp distinction between individual and collective memory, and yet he opined that 'as a form of awareness, memory is wholly and intensely personal'.[282] Other humanists and social scientists have their own approaches to the topic. Nonetheless, this

[277] Halbwachs 1980[1950], 22-49.

[278] Bammer 2017. As an example, see Worchel and Coutant 2004, 183. However, compare to Barnier and Sutton 2008.

[279] Grever and Adriaansen 2017; Kansteiner 2002; Kansteiner 2006; Winter 2006.

[280] Kalela 2012. For example, in Finnish historiography oral history, i.e. doing historical research by using interviews or other kinds of oral sources, is often translated as 'memory data studies' [muistitietotutkimus]. Fingerroos and Peltonen 2006, 7-24. The epistemological interplay of different knowledges about the past is recognized as a common problem in oral history studies (e.g. Thomson 2011, 77-95; Green 2011, 96-111), and even if I have not ventured into the oral history of the famines in any systematic way in this thesis, the oral historian's reading of source criticism and way of interpreting omissions and silences in narratives have influenced the way I approach representations of famines.

[281] Keywords in this latter approach are commemorations, act of remembrance, and politics of memory. Lowenthal 1998; Nora 1997; Hobsbawm 1983.

[282] Lowenthal 1985, 194.

discrepancy creates an insurmountable communicational and epistemological wall between a number of very different disciplinary approaches toward memory, that can be roughly divided into two camps: one that studies memory in the individual and its repercussions in society and history, and another that cannot make up its mind on whether it is interested in collective memory or the memories of the collective, or even how that collective is supposed to be defined, and thus blurs memory with other forms of representing the past.

Hence, there is a wide range of meanings attached to the study of collective memory that, on the one hand, provides elasticity and is inclusive of a variety of perspectives, but on the other hand lacks in rigour and sharpness when the interplay between history and memory for a chosen community is explored, and/or how that interplay changes overtime and between individuals. As theoretical concepts, there is naturally some overlap between history and memory, i.e. historical narratives and sources rely on someone's memory. But history is collective by its nature, as a form of knowledge history is collectively produced and shared for collectives. In the words of the late David Lowenthal, 'just as memory validates personal identity, history perpetuates collective self-awareness.'[283] Memory, on the other, can be anything.

The problem of collective memory as an analytical concept comes to the fore when we ask how famines have been interpreted in Finnish and Irish collective/cultural memories. This raises the question of *who* defines a) national, b) collective/cultural, and c) memory? Several problems emerge: Can or should the national collective memory be a collection of its diverse or uniform subcommunities' collective memory, or individuals' memory? What is that collective? When is it, and who is entitled to speak for it? Is it the state, historians, or local communities? Women or men? The diaspora or those who stayed behind? The actively involved relief worker, the distant bureaucrat, or the orphan who managed to somehow get by? Or all of these? What are the primary sources that represent *the* collective memory? How does collective memory differ from an individual's memory, and from historical sources? How do we integrate diverse and contesting memories to one set of collective memory?[284]

These are not just theoretical and conceptual quibbles that can be overcome or set aside, but real hardcore empirical problems that define what kind of sources we critically interrogate and how we interpret them. They are vital questions, especially when we take into account the critical examination of nation-building and who is entitled to speak for the nation and define the nation at specific moments. Such questions in our research period from 1850 to the 1960s were occasionally of life-and-death importance, not the least during the country's civil wars in the 1910s and 1920s and their aftermath. Consequently, it is more fruitful to admit that there exists not just one

[283] Lowenthal 1985, 213.

[284] See also Cormac Ó Gráda's discussion on the same problems. Ó Gráda 2006a, 229-233.

Finnish/Irish collective memory, but several memories between groups as well as between individuals.

3.2.1 WHY 'CULTURAL MEMORY' DOES NOT WORK

A very similar approach, with similar problems to collective memory, is the concept of cultural memory, explored by Jan and Aleida Assman in a number of works.[285] For them, cultural memory picks up where Halbwachs' collective memory left off. In other words, they explicitly extrapolate the Halbwachsian collective memory from its small scale social embeddedness in the individual to a larger cultural, ethnic, or societal entity, while well aware of Halbwachs' theoretical weakness, and indeed partially because of it.[286] The shift of emphasis is how the past, reinterpreted as memory, 'is given communicative and cultural presence.'[287] According to Jan Assman, as personal remembering is doubly founded on biographical memory and foundational memory, with fixed objectifications (both linguistic and non-linguistic, such as rituals, dances, myths, patterns, dress, jewellery, tattoos, paintings, landscapes, etc.) that have mnemotechnical functions, so too does cultural memory have its 'institutionalized mnemotechnics'[288] through different carriers such as shamans, teachers, artists, scholars, and others.[289] Aleida Assman has developed this notion for modern societies, and how they structure their cultural memory in *archives*, as passive memory, and as *canon*, as active memory on display.[290]

In this study, if I would have used Aleida Assman's categories, I could say that my focus has been this latter one, i.e. the active and public display of famine. The problem with that approach would be that mnemohistory persists in at least four dimensions that this categorization does not capture. That is: i) the historical and public display of famine, ii) the hidden (and often orally transmitted) memory of famine in the past and present, iii) the archived oral and written testimonies of the famine in preserved in folklore or family archives, and iv) (because we are talking about memory) the omissions, exclusions, euphemisms, and conscious or half-conscious misinterpretations and forgettings that frame and structure what is represented and interpreted of the past.[291] All of these categories are both private and political expressions

[285] Assman, Aleida 2011; Assman 1997.

[286] Assman, Aleida 2011, 31-34.

[287] Assman 2011, 33.

[288] Assman 2011, 37. Some scholars have also studied commemorative rituals and social rituals as a form of mnemotechnique. For instance, Zerubavel 2003; Connerton, 1989; Hobsbawm 1983; Lowenthal 1985 and Lowenthal 1998.

[289] Assman 2011, 39.

[290] Assman, Aleida 2011, 335.

[291] As an example, consider the interpretation of four digit numbers within certain context; for instance, the year 1847 in Ireland is generally associated with the Famine. However, this was lost to the

of mnemohistory, they are all connected with memory, but with variation in scale depending on the context. Jay Winter, a leading scholar of the Great War and its remembrance, has summarised the Assmans' cultural memory as 'a set of codes in a literary, aesthetic, and philosophical framework. Those codes are frequently defined as national in character, with deep resonance in literary and religious life of a people. They therefore are intensely political, though in a very broad sense.'[292]

The problems that I have with this definition of cultural memory (but not with the concepts of mnemotechnical institutions and functions), and why I hesitate to use it, are primarily based on its lack of a solid and critical definition of what constitutes a culture. And secondly, because it accepts as viable for study those visible cultural practices that can be found in the canon or in the archives, but excludes the omissions, silences, and forgotten pasts that were never included in archival collections, the blank spots which we ought to be sensitive enough to recognise and which are a fundamental part of how nations or any community represent and come to terms with their own failures. Thirdly, it includes a very narrow and inaccurate definition of the historical profession, an interpretation that derives from a merging of the views of the sociologist Halbawchs and the cultural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss.[293] Cultural memory leans towards, or allows too much leeway for, becoming a cultural study imbued with 'methodological nationalism' or other ethnocentric pitfalls, perhaps unconsciously, although 'methodological nationalism' is rarely a conscious choice.[294] The prime example in this category is Pierre Nora's edited essay collection in three volumes on the construction of the French past as *Lieux de mémoire,*[295] a remarkable work of various aspects of how memory can be approached in a cultural context, but confined strictly to a national frame and interpretation. This has inspired a number of other national memory studies, including in Ireland.[296] In other words, these are studies that critically analyse sociocultural practices concerning memory, history, and traditions, and in a trendy fashion, yet within the frame of the

international beer company Carlsberg, which was founded in the same year in Copenhagen, and which in 2014 ran a beer add in Ireland that carried the slogan "1847: Our best ever since date". See https://www.broadsheet.ie/2014/11/03/carlsberg-dont-do-history/ (last visited 4.10.2018). Another example is when the mayor of Helsinki Jussi Pajunen attempted to prohibit begging by law in 2010 (due to the influx of a number of Roma beggars from Romania), stating that 'begging is not part of Finnish culture'. This statement makes sense only for those people who do not remember that begging had been a widespread phenomenon in Finnish society until the twentieth century. See http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Mayor+Pajunen+ponders+begging+issue+on+walk+through+centre+of+Helsinki/1135260835206 (last visited 24.2.2014).

[292] Winter 2006, 104.

[293] Assman 2011, 28-31, 51-53.

[294] On methodological nationalism, see Beck 2005, 43-50; Lorenz 1999, 25-39; Chernilo 2011.

[295] For a critical overview Nora's contribution, see Erll 2011; Berger and Lorenz 2011, 14-19.

[296] Frawley 2011, Frawley 2012, Frawley 2014a, Frawley and O'Callaghan 2014.

national gaze, very much as older national histories, national grand narratives, or national social surveys did. They historicise the reality of history and its effects, but within the national scope.

This broad and metaphorical application of memory is something that I do not necessarily like, but with some caution and added clarifications I can see its potential. Nevertheless, the bewildering usage of culture seems like a vague substitute for an undefined collective unit, that often implicitly becomes interpreted as national or some other ethno-symbolic identity.[297] Among cultural memory scholars, culture is often 'personified' as a remembering entity, as Guy Beiner perceptively noted in his review of Frawley's third volume in the Memory Ireland series.[298] This ambiguity of the social unit under analysis is difficult to accommodate with a study that wants to deconstruct and make visible the rhetoric behind the creation and transformation of social units.[299] Assman's theorization on the interdependence between identity and culture has some valuable points, but as a whole it remains incoherent and suggests some kind of supposedly self-evident cultural unit that individuals automatically identify themselves with.[300] On the one hand, it remains unclear how culture relates to people, society, groups and ethnic markers, nations and civilizations, and how the discourse itself reinforces identity markers.[301] And, on the other hand, it forms a pattern of circular reasoning, where culture forms identity because identity is culture. So, what is the explanatory value of cultural memory?

In my view, as an analytical device cultural memory obfuscates more than it explains. In comparison, mnemohistory does not imply any particular social unit of analysis (such as culture), but demands that a clear specification is made every time. And because it recognises the fluctuations between memory and history, no single spokesperson or text can be interpreted as representing

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[297] Smith 2009.

[298] Beiner 2015.

[299] Also Green 2011, 101.

[300] Assman, Jan 2011, 70-141. He writes about the role of canon as 'the principle underlying the establishment and stabilization of a collective identity as the medium of invidualization through socialization, or as Habermas puts it, self-realization through incorporation into "the normative consciousness of a whole people." It connects…representing the collective social body and a system of meanings and values through which the individual becomes part of the whole, thereby signaling his identity as a member' (Assman 2011, 108). If this is not a description of Jungian memory, which he discusses with regards to Halbwachs (Assman 2011, 33), or Hegelian national spirit, then what is it?

[301] As an example, Assman writes: 'When an ethnic unit merges with another ethnopolitical group through alliance, migration, or conquest, there are bound to be problems. The dominant culture takes on transethnic validity, thereby acquiring the status of the more advanced civilization and thus marginalizing the cultural formations of the other group' (Assman 2011, 125). What constitutes an ethnic unit, an ethnopolitical group, a dominant culture, a transethnic validity, an 'advanced civilization' (quite a normative definition), a cultural formation, or a group? These are not clarified in any way, and a significant part of the literature on these issues is disregarded.

a society's historical identity in its entirety, but every claim must be critically examined as one amongst many, even one amongst many silent examples. This makes mnemohistory conceptually more adaptive for a study, like that of famines, where the social unit of analysis is fluid, under transformation, contested, and includes many layers of memory practices and historical representations.

I will follow Jay Winter's conclusion that as a category of analysis cultural memory works best, if it is to work at all, 'when it is applied to the activity and products of groups and not to that of states as a whole.'[302] I would add to this my personal remark that these 'groups' need to be clearly defined in each spatial and temporal context. Change one dimension of the context, and we have another group. One preliminary, rough, but practical method to begin to identify these groups is to ask who can actually remember the event or period under investigation, and then limit the idea of famine memory to those groups. In other words, the goal is to make a distinction between those who experienced the famine, and thus can remember something of it, and those who were born afterwards, and thus did not experience it and therefore can have no direct and personal recollection of the famine [as an example of this see Figure 1 and 2].[303] I agree with the notion that memory is interdependent of others, embedded in a social environment, and that it is thus a social construction. This is congruent with current social identity theory, social psychological studies on the self, identity, and memory, and also the notion of neural systems plasticity.[304] But I also hold to the very clinical definition of memory embodied in the neural system of an individual, and that memory proper can only be empirically studied in an individual or in the interaction between individuals, and I prefer to keep this distinction for the sake of conceptual and analytical clarity.[305]

3.2.2 ORAL HISTORY AND ORAL TRADITION, AND HOW THEY RELATE TO MNEMOHISTORY

How does oral history, or what in Finnish is often referred to as memory-data research (*muistitietotutkimus*), relate to my notion of mnemohistory? Firstly, oral history is the gathering of information through interviews that have somehow been recorded or preserved as transcripts for further study of the past.[306] It is an assessment of information about the past derived from an individual's memory that, of course, is embedded and reconfigured within a

[302] Winter 2006, 138-139.

[303] Compare to LaCapra 2001, ix.

[304] Burke and Stets 2009; Ross and Buehler 2004, 25-51; Abrams and Hogg 2004, 147-181; Worchel and Coutant 2004, 182-202; Belzung and Wigmore 2013.

[305] I am not alone in this preference. See Green 2011, 104-107; LaCapra 2001.

[306] Ritchie 2011, 3-16.

social environment and social interactions.[307] Within the scholarship on oral history, much emphasis is placed upon the manner in which the interview is organized. However, the interrogation of a live witness in the present is remarkably different from interpreting transcriptions or audiotapes, which is also often referred to as oral history.[308] Secondly, oral history is distinct from oral tradition. To put it plainly, oral history is what historians do when they use orally gathered information on past events, while oral tradition is what e.g. folklorist study, that is belief systems, attitudes and narratives about the past that are shared within a social group. When historians have reservations about the usefulness of oral history, it is often because they are sceptical about the accuracy and trustworthiness of individual memory for providing relevant information of the event in question, not to mention narratives orally transmitted from generation to generation. Oral recollections are often found to incorporate errors that contrast with other primary sources documented closer to the event in question.[309] This constitutes less of a problem for folklorists, because their interest is focused less on the trustworthiness of the historical claims and content and more on the form, context, and representability of the narrative in the moment the tradition was documented. However, there is no reason why a historian should be inhibited in approaching a folklore collection in the same manner as he or she approaches any other historical source: to contextualize it, foremost, as an artefact and representation of the people's feelings and attitudes in the time and place it was created and archived.[310]

In folklore sources, the contents of the narratives are sometimes layered with other narratives circulated in the public discourse.[311] This makes oral tradition and its study a key component of mnemohistory, as it entangles memory with historical and written narratives. On the memory of the Irish Famine, Niall Ó Ciosáin has distinguished between 'global memory', with a high level of abstraction, 'usually national in scope and often derived from written sources';[312] 'local memory', a straightforward recollection of local knowledge, interest, and named individuals and places;[313] and 'popular memory', which consists of 'a stylised repertoire of images, motifs, short narratives, and supernatural legends, many of them part of a wider international narrative repertoire, which form a system of representation of famine and scarcity as well as a guide to behaviour during such crises'.[314] Popular memory can function as an intersection connecting a moral lesson

[307] Thompson 2000, 23-24.

[308] Ó Ciosáin 2004, 223.

[309] Ó Gráda 1999.

[310] For an excellent example see Ó Gráda 1999, 194-225; see also Ó Ciosáin 2001, 99.

[311] For example, Ó Ciosáin 2004.

[312] Ó Ciosáin 2004, 224.

[313] Ó Ciosáin 2004, 225.

[314] Ó Ciosáin 2004, 225.

with a supposedly localized event, such recalling charitable persons or actions. However, popular memory distances itself from local memory by transforming the focus into a moral lesson, with a narrative structure that is adaptable to almost any locality. With regards to global memory, popular memory takes shape as metanarratives. In the Irish case, Ó Ciosáin notes a nationalist metanarrative, on the one hand, and a Catholic metanarrative, on the other. Both narratives were disseminated through written publications half a century prior to the collecting of the oral testimonies, and were thus well known to at least some of the informants.[315] A similar kind of layering, although hitherto not categorized and articulated in Ó Ciosáin's style, could potentially be identified in some of the Finnish folklore collections.[316]

In Finland, oral history is translated as 'muistitietotutkimus', i.e. memory-data research. It is often grouped alongside folklore studies or, if the scholars are historians, then as either 'popular history' or 'history from below', or it is generically indexed together with 'memory', as Jorma Kalela did.[317] Finnish memory-data research also includes, in addition to interviews (the core function of oral history), archived collections of questionnaires and reminiscences, in other words typical folklore sources, both as audiotapes and written records. Hence, oral history in its strict sense is too narrow to describe Finnish memory-data research in its entire scope. It goes beyond the orally communicated narratives of the past.[318] However, oral history is often referred to as providing a theoretical lens that guides researchers in interpreting and giving meaning to their sources. Thus, memory-data research uses oral history as an interpretational method, and as source criticism on how to read folklore sources and narratives based on memories and oral transmissions.[319]

The Finnish folklore collections are abundant with myths and legends and everyday histories, as well as records of specific events (including the famine of the 1860s), collected on many occasions and archived by the Finnish Literary Society, by the Finnish Historical Association, by the Swedish Literary Society in Finland, by the left-leaning People's Archive and Workers Archive, and many other individual persons and institutions as well. Many social scientists, historians, and folklorists interested in nineteenth and twentieth century consumption patterns, everyday and "ordinary" life, and memories and belief systems on various topics have made good use of these collections.[320] However, the topic of the 1860s famine is dispersed in several collections, and only a limited number of stories have been selected for

[315] Ó Ciosáin 2004, 226.

[316] E.g. Häkkinen 1987, 73–76.

[317] Kalela 2012, 191; see also Kalela 2012, 31, 62.

[318] Fingerroos and Haanpää 2006, 26-27.

[319] Fingerroos and Haanpää 2006, 43-44.

[320] Popular topics, as well as those thematically connected to famines, include the Civil War (Peltonen 1996; Peltonen 2003; Heimo 2010), modernity and poverty (Helsti et al. 2006; Stark 2011; Virkkunen 2010; Mikkola 2009), and family (Latvala 2001, Latvala 2005).

publication;[321] in some cases these stories have even been censored,[322] however the material available could probably be used in a much more effective way than Finnish famine scholars to-date have done (with the exception of Antti Häkkinen).[323] The famine folklore collections were collected by the Etelä-Pohjalaisen osuuskunnan (Southern-Osthrobothnian Student Union) in 1915-1916, the Finnish Historical Society in 1916-1917, and the Finnish Literary Society in 1939.[324] The earliest in particular include recollections by persons that had experienced and witnessed the episode themselves.

Perhaps surprisingly, a similar conceptual situation can be noted in the Irish academic context. Ireland has a vibrant folklore scholarship and folklore archives, including records of the Famine, which historians have utilized.[325] In 1935 the government of the Irish Free State founded the Irish Folklore Commission to collect and research Irish folklore and traditions.[326] The Commission's collection is preserved and managed by the Department of Irish Folklore at the University College Dublin. The folklore about the famine was collected in two ways.[327] The first, in the mid-1930s, was through school teachers who assigned their pupils to collect stories of the Famine by interviewing older relatives and acquaintances. Recently, this material has been made digitally accessible through the UCD's National Folklore Collection Digitization Project.[328] In 1945 another set of questionnaires was circulated, which accumulated about 3,500 pages of testimony.[329]

It is important to note that the Irish famine folklore collection differs from the Finnish in the sense that its testimonies are by and large testimonies of the second and third generations, and includes far fewer first person accounts, while the earlier Finnish collection includes first-hand accounts. Thus, they represent different generational layers of mnemohistory, and cannot provide answers to similar research questions except in a very limited way. Crucially, viewing them from the perspective of collective or cultural memory would hide the qualitatively important difference between first hand accounts and second or third hand accounts. In the case of these latter categories, historical knowledge, be that academic or popular, has a much greater influence.

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[321] For example, Wessman 1924, 282–289; Simonsuuri 1951[2006], 168–180.

[322] Häkkinen 1991b.

[323] Häkkinen 1987; Häkkinen 1991b, 268–272.

[324] Häkkinen 1987, 73.

[325] McHugh 1956, 391–436; Ó Gráda 1999, 194-225; Ó Ciosáin 2001, 96-117; O Ciosáin 1995, 7-10; Póirtéir 1995, 219-231; Póirtéir 2015; Póirtéir 2012, 602-607.

[326] Briody 2007.

[327] Póirtéir 1995, 219.

[328] National Folklore Collection UCD Digitization Project, https://www.duchas.ie/en (Last visited 8.3.2019).

[329] Ó Ciosáin 2001, 96.

As sources to provide accurate information about the famine periods, the two archives are hopelessly incomparable, although in their own right they may provide unique information on local details and universal master narratives. Above all, their main value is that they may reflect some portion of the oral tradition of the time when they were created. However, that can only be verified through a careful, detailed, qualitative and contextual assessment of the sources. Another aspect worth noting about the Irish collection, as highlighted by scholars fluent in the Irish language, is that the testimonies in this language are said to be much richer in scope and detail than those originating from English speakers.[330] A contrasting assessment of the Finnish collections and the linguistic background of their respondents has never been attempted by any Finnish scholar, exemplifying the need for more scrutiny of the Finnish material.

In addition to these archived folkloristic collections, there is another group of sources that should be addressed when speaking about collectively disseminated memories of the famine. This includes published memoirs, autobiographies, or obituaries of persons that lived in and witnessed the period. The publication forms include widely distributed newspapers, as well as regional and more locally focused outlets. Reminiscences about the famine can be found in a number of different books with organizational, cultural, or societal interests, and even in historical narratives. It is typical of these stories that the protagonist eventually became, to some degree, a socially respected person within their community during his (or hers, but mostly his) lifetime, which contributed to the willingness to make that person's personal life story and recollections publicly accessible. These are by definition personal stories, but it would be naïve if we were to deny the social outreach that these publications have had, and how they contributed to the socially shared perception of the famine periods. As eye-witness accounts, they are often ascribed with great authority, at least within their readership, as representatives of a 'true' account. The element of direct experience and personal witnessing are central to these stories, what Jay Winter calls 'moral witnessing', and sometimes they have the goal of setting the record straight; in other words, correcting a competing interpretation of the event.[331] The protagonist is often from the upper echelons of society, but not always. However, what is typical is that the Famine is rarely the main topic in these narratives, although it may nevertheless have an important function as a key turning point in their life story. These narratives certainly contribute to the socially shared connotations of famine memories and historical narratives within their audiences. This type of published personified reminiscences on the famine periods were abundant, especially between the period approximately 20 to 80 years after the famines.

[330] Ó Ciosáin 2004; Póirtéir 2012, 603; Ó Gráda 1999, 199.

[331] Winter 2006, 240-258.

At an early stage of this research project I decided that I would exclude the folklore material, because I wanted to have clear focus on the public and national representations of famine. My original reasoning was that the collections represent views of only a more limited and private nature, such as local stories and family reminiscences that did not inspire a broader interest and media publicity, and thus that they do not reflect a public representation of the famines, but a more-or-less circumscribed latent set of attitudes, memories, and narratives in the margins. Therefore, I assumed they were of less importance for the publicly dominant master narratives. In a sense, I still hold this point of view, although now I would call it a premature or a naïve one. Now, my view has matured to understand oral tradition as an additional guide to advancing our comprehension of the reasons for why certain issues penetrate the public domain and why others do not. Oftentimes the choices that determine mnemohistorical consumption in the public and private domains are entangled with and reactionary to each other. Since I started my research project, my interest has sharpened to include seeking an understanding of the relationships, contrasts, and perhaps even contradictions between the local, or ideologically separate, and national narratives. In retrospect, I can only regret that I did not plan to include a systematic scrutiny of comparative folklore memories, despite the many practical and theoretical difficulties that come along with such an endeavour: the first and foremost in this case being mastering the Irish language. For practical reasons, and in order to finish the thesis in a timely manner, I have decided to make partial and random use of these sources, but only to the extent that they exemplify either a public interest by virtue of their existence or a localized mnemohistorical particularity that contrasts with a master trend. Hopefully, I can pursue a systematic, broader, and more detailed analysis of the collections in the not too distant future.

3.3 'MEMORY' IS NOT AN INNOCENT METAPHOR

Memory is no shorter path to the "true" past than historical knowledge, even if it feels more personal and private. Memory is not a camera lens that restores the past as it happened in the neural system, only to be retrieved when it is remembered. Memory too is vulnerable to error and the invention of events that never occurred.[332] Both memory and history are responses and creations meant to make sense of the present, and thus are vulnerable to inventions, errors, omissions, selections, and re-interpretations.[333] They are only a fraction of the entire past, and 'less than the past'.[334]

[332] Schacter 2001[1996], 112-148.

[333] Ross and Buehler 2005.

[334] Lowenthal 1985, 212-217.

Based upon cognitive science addressing how metaphors and other literary practices shape our thinking, reasoning, and narratives, even unconsciously,[335] I believe we need to be extra cautious when assessing memory as a social phenomenon. Simultaneously, whether thinking about crises in general or famines in particular, ethical contemplation is ever-present, and from there we find a very short path to moral lessons drawn from the past. According to George Lakoff, one of the leading scholars in cognitive linguistics, '[m]uch of moral reasoning is metaphorical reasoning',[336] and hence the critical deconstruction of details is not about nit-picking the self-evident, but an exercise in unveiling the (perhaps) unconsciously attributed *meaning* or practical and strategic *function* in narratives about the past and crises.[337] The metaphorical use of collective memory as a substitute for past experiences that individuals have not experienced personally is hardly an innocent form of identity politics. Indeed, collective memory implicitly involves a stronger sense of unity between individuals, because it utilizes the embodied metaphor of 'community as a person' or 'nation as a person'.[338] It is a concept that functions as a tool for identity politics. The discourse on cultural, collective, or social memory implies and reinforces an identity category that may be, and often implicitly, a hegemonic and potentially contested one.

Importantly, things and groups do not remember as single units. Concrete monuments do not recall, not even when they have a carved inscription. It requires a conscious human mind to perform the trick of reading, hearing, and interpreting that remnant from the past. It is people that do the interpreting and remembering. Individuals may remember together, or alone but with the support devices and artefacts that are associated with other people. Whatever takes place during a commemoration procession, or in public debates, or media representations, the social features and dynamics that are displayed are more a matter of communicative practices between individuals and groups, and therefore approaches from media studies (e.g. reception, audiences, agenda-setting, technology) could be a more beneficial departure point for analysis.[339] In the end, the act of remembering or forgetting takes place in the individual, even in a social surrounding. It is individuals who do the remembering, and in their own ways.[340] And, in that sense it would be

[335] Thibodeau and Boroditsky 2011; Veivo 2005, 11-27; Lakoff and Johnson 1999; Lakoff 2002; Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Hogan 2009.

[336] Lakoff 2002, 5.

[337] Compare to Keen's way of analysing complex emergencies through a Foucauldian lens of assessing the policies surrounding crisis not as a failure, but as manifesting a *function*. Keen 2008.

[338] For a theoretical discussion see Lakoff 2002; Hogan 2009.

[339] For such examples see Kansteiner 2006; Kligler-Vilenchik, Tsfati and Meyers 2014.

[340] Lowenthal 1985, 194-195.

more appropriate to talk about collected memories, than collective memories.[341]

In conclusion, contemporary historical theories and social psychological perspectives on memory have two things in common. Firstly, the past is not retrievable from a secure storage room, be it the archives or a hard disk or some corner of the brain; on the contrary, they are a creative process taking place in the present, in order to meet present and anticipated future needs.[342] Representations of the past are never the past itself. They are always reconstructions. Mnemohistory seeks to deconstruct them. Secondly, both history and memory are fundamental particles in the (re-)construction of identities. There can be no self, no identity without a notion of a past self, without a notion of the origin of that identity.[343] They are so important that much of the discussion on history and memory always slip into, perhaps unintentionally, some form of identity discourse, and the more political or ideological the topics become the more they reflect identity politics.

3.3.1 TRANSGENERATIONAL MEMORY AND ITS PROBLEMS

This leads me to discussing the issue of transgenerational memory, or what literary scholar Marianne Hirsch calls postmemory. The notion of postmemory refers to memory that is transmitted to second generations.[344] This is intriguing, and attempts have been made to apply it to the level of cultural or national entities, mostly for identifying some kind of cultural trauma, where 'cultural' is often taken as a substitute for national or some other ethnic identity.[345] It is noteworthy that postmemory is not a biological legacy similar to those medical and anthropometric studies focusing on post-famine health-effects, as discussed earlier. Indeed, it is more related to, or perhaps even inspired by, the very recently evolved epigenetic studies on trauma transfer across generations.[346]

Hirsch's postmemory draws from and is related to Pierre Nora's 'sites of memory' *(lieux de mémoire)*, which studies the relation between an artefact (in Hirsch's case family photographs), its inscribed symbolism, and how it activates the viewer's personal memory of family members, their life stories, and the historical events they took part in. Her position is not very far from Maurice Halbwach's original point, that all memories require a social framework to trigger them in order to become meaningful for the individual.[347] Hirsch locates the narratives of the past in a family frame, and explores how

[341] Winters 2006.

[342] Ross and Buehler 2004.

[343] Lowenthal 1985, 213.

[344] Hirsch 1997; note the similarity with 'cultural trauma' as used in Alexander 2004.

[345] Arrowsmith 2012, 12-23.

[346] Carey 2018.

[347] Halbwachs 1992. Although Hirsch does not reference Halbwachs.

photography of and from ancestors triggers narratives of the past in the second generation. Basically, for Hirsch postmemory is a narrative that is mediated, triggered by sites of memory and personal 'imaginative investment and creation', hence it is neither history nor memory, but something in-between, i.e. postmemory.[348]

However, if we stick to the neuroscientific definition of memory, this notion remains conceptually misleading.[349] Hirsch defends the term by describing it as 'the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated.'[350] In other words, it is not about memories (in the neuropsychological sense), but about growing up in an environment where previous generations narratives of the past take centre stage at the cost of one's own experiences, and the possible narratives that they may inspire.[351]

It could be intriguing to test this concerning the famine and post-famine generations, however there is a slight problem of finding the appropriate sources in large enough quantities that would reflect such dilemmas for a whole society. Certainly, anecdotal evidence of such cultural transmissions exists; e.g. the Irish (American) folksong Skibbereen, where the emigrant father tells his son why he left his beloved Skibbereen, and the son in turn promises revenge for what happened in Skibbereen. That is a famine narrative, a memory of the famine if you will, that is transplanted to the second generation in the narrative of the song. The question remains, however, how much does the representation of the transfer-phenomena described in this case, admittedly in a very popular folksong, tell us about actual transfers on a broader scale in a wider population? Not much. As anyone who has ever sang along with Abba's popular song 'Waterloo' knows, remembering and singing the tune is not equivalent to remembering the events and context of the battle fought at Waterloo in 1815. In addition, the song is a metaphor for something completely different. At the most it signifies a culturally embedded code of meanings for the particular concept 'Waterloo', but what Waterloo means for different people the song cannot really say. We must find other sources.

The lyrics in Skibbereen suggest a Fenian and nationalistic Irish-American tradition, but it did not become popular in Ireland until it was transformed into a slow-paced and minor scale Famine lament.[352] For instance, the folklore surveys covering the famines in Ireland and Finland did not, regretfully for Hirsch's point, ask their respondents if they were burdened by their parents'

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[348] Hirsch 1997, 22.

[349] One could also criticize her way of separating history and memory from each other, to an extent that would require a bridge between them, a task that postmemory could fulfil. But I remain unconvinced of such a stark juxtaposition. See also Winters 2006, 288.

[350] Hirsch 1997, 22.

[351] See also Kansteiner 2004b, 104-107.

[352] Milner 2016.

narratives, whatever narratives those may have been. And if some generation(s) happen to embrace a particular song, like Skibbereen, should we interpret that as an indication that they are burdened, or perhaps even traumatized, by their own parents' experience? That would be a too hasty conclusion. Moreover, as the song is an emigrant song, how do we account for the fact that it became hugely popular amongst the remaining population in Ireland? Furthermore, it is not unusual for oral and local histories to diverge from or contrast their general historiographical outlines, and the tune above underlines in the Irish context a particular Fenian narrative of vengeance, which taken as whole complicates the issue of inscribing certain profound meanings to some narratives but not to others. (Here we return to the problem of collective or collected memory.) I remain unconvinced of the utility of postmemory for two additional reasons.

I will clarify my first concern even at the risk of sounding somewhat banal: have we not all grown up in a narrative-landscape that overshadow our own stories, until we are old enough to overshadow the next generation with our own stories? Is this not what socialization, maturation, and growing into a self-awareness of one's place in time is all about?[353] Does this process even require traumatized parents? Or are we all traumatized? (In which case, the concept loses much of its potential to explain any phenomena, and becomes quite trivial in the end.)

Having said that, I want to emphasize that no one denies that the experience of the parents' generation, inclusive of potentially traumatic events, would have an effect on the second-generation. Of course they do. But what effect exactly? As Kansteiner has pointed out in the case of traumatization diagnosed in Holocaust survivors' second generation in the 1980s, the trauma is not so much about the Holocaust as it is about bad parenting, although partially, but not exclusively, created by the parents' Holocaust experiences.[354] A similar conclusion can be drawn from a recent Finnish study on the higher proclivity toward PTSD symptoms diagnosed in children whose fathers had migrated from conflict-prone regions in the Middle East and North Africa in the 1980s to the 2000s.[355] The future fathers from this region had undoubtedly suffered from high stress levels and hardships endured in their country of origin, and during migration, but the PTSD diagnoses of their children probably has less to do with the father's trauma than with the origin of the mother and the ordinary balance within the family. The children of two migrant parents were less inclined to be diagnosed with

[353] Berger and Luckmann 1966; Oyserman 2004; Burke and Stets 2009, 193-195; Kansteiner 2004b, 106-107.

[354] Only partially, because studies on the peers of Holocaust survivors' children, not least the perpetrators' children, have shown similar results of bad parenting causing trauma. Kansteiner 2004b, 106-107.

[355] Silwal et al. 2019.

PTSD than in culturally mixed marriages,[356] which is consistent with an earlier Danish study that yielded similar results.[357] The same applies to the assumption that later symptoms of cardiovascular disease manifested as a result of parental bereavement during a famine. The question is more about how we categorize, measure, and analyse the impact-variables and their manifestation in a very complex social process of transgenerational appropriation, learning, and reception of values and knowledge systems that takes place in families and beyond.[358] Consequently, to suggest that this effect is the result of the transmission of a loosely defined or metaphorical 'memory' and manifested as postmemory is questionable and, to put it mildly, a grand trivialization of a psychological concept and an oversimplification of a socially complex phenomenon. Whatever trauma parents have endured, and whatever trauma their children have endured, it is analytically and conceptually better to recognize that these traumas are two separate traumas, not one.

My second concern relates to Hirsch's rudimentary and superficial use of trauma, or what Jeffrey Alexander calls "lay trauma theory",[359] which is typical in the field of memory studies, as pointed out earlier.[360] Hirsch develops the concept of postmemory in relation to the children of Holocaust survivors, and this is probably the reason for accrediting the element of trauma.[361] Therefore, her contribution to the field should be considered one example of the literature concerning the debates on (Holocaust survivors) second generation "trauma" and historical/cultural trauma.[362] However, scholars of cultural trauma do often recognize that there is a vital difference between a psychiatric individual trauma and a collective/cultural trauma, which should not be blurred.[363] According to psychologists Eve B. Carlsson and Constance J. Dalenberg, the potentially traumatic event must be 'negative, uncontrollable and sudden.'[364] In this sense a famine could not be traumatic, due to its wider temporal, spatial, and conceptual frame, but separate events during it, such as the loss of one's food reserves or a family member, could be. Similarly, the Clinical Practice Guideline for the treatment of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) published by the American Psychological Association uses a very broad

[356] Silwal et al. 2019.

[357] Cantor-Graae and Pedersen 2013.

[358] Kansteiner 2004b; Erll 2011. See also Kligler-Vilenchik, Tsfati and Meyers 2014.

[359] Alexander 2004, 2-3.

[360] Kansteiner 2002; Kansteiner 2004a; Bammer 2017.

[361] The Holocaust certainly is a recurring point of reference in collective memory studies. See for example Kõresaar, Lauk and Kuutma 2009; Alexander 2002; O Ciosáin 1995, 7; Winters 2006.

[362] For example, see Kansteiner 2004b; Wiechelt and Gryczynski 2012; Alexander 2004; Smelser 2004.

[363] LaCapra 2001; Alexander 2004; Smelser 2004; Kansteiner 2004a and 2004b; Visser 2011.

[364] Carlsson and Dalenberg 2000, 6.

definition,[365] although as Kansteiner reminds us they do have a professional and economic bias to be able to diagnose trauma as widely as possible.[366] However, the clinical definition of trauma is meant to identify and provide a basis for the treatment and healing of individual patients. In contrast to popular parlance, although trauma as a psycho-pathological condition is caused *by* an event, the event itself should not be seen as traumatic.[367] The clear majority of those who experience such an event are not permanently traumatized by it, and only a small minority develop psycho-pathological trauma symptoms.[368]

With regards to the study of famines and their afterlife in societies, a common association that people to whom I present my work make is that I regard famine as traumatic, and therefore the whole of society is traumatized, and so what I study is how that trauma manifests itself. This is a misunderstanding, and my real aim is to deconstruct that conceptual bridge, because it rests upon a scientifically weak foundation and engages in the identity politics of projecting certain selected past events onto a contestable definition of "us". Based on my review of the literature, my conclusion is: famine is not traumatic in itself, but individual experiences and events during a famine can be potentially traumatic.

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[365] "Defining Trauma. According to the 5th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM-5, (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), exposure to traumatic events can occur in one (or more) ways: 1) direct experiencing; 2) witnessing, in person; 3) learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a family member, or someone else in close relationship; 4) experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s) (common in first responders and emergency personnel). Trauma refers to events or experiences that are shocking and overwhelming, typically involving major threat to the physical, emotional, or psychological safety and well-being of the individual victim(s) and loved ones and friends (as well as to others). Its original occurrence is usually sudden and unexpected and it may be a one-time event. In some cases, after the first incident, it may recur on either a shortterm or intermittent basis or it may occur on a regular or prolonged basis to the point of becoming continuous and chronic. Examples of traumatic events include: military combat, acts of terror; motor vehicle and other accidents; natural or human-caused disasters and accidents, sudden or violent death of loved ones; interpersonal violence, such as mass shootings, assaults, and physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; traumatic separations and other significant losses (including neglect and abandonment); hostage-taking; torture; slavery; and certain types of disability, illness, and medical treatment, especially for life-threatening conditions. The definition of psychological trauma has been widely debated and the delineation of a traumatic event in DSM (known as Criterion A) has gone through numerous revisions (Weathers & Keane, 2007). Due to the varying magnitude, complexity, intensity, frequency and duration of potential stressors, mental health experts have grappled to create an all-encompassing definition of trauma." Clinical Practice Guideline for the treatment of PTSD, 6.

[366] Kansteiner 2004b, 101-104.

[367] Clinical Practice Guideline for the treatment of PTSD, 6.

[368] Zautra, Hall and Murray 2010; Mancini and Bonanno 2010.

3.3.2 'CULTURAL TRAUMA' AS MANUFACTURED IDENTITY

The most prominent proponent of cultural trauma theory, Jeffrey Alexander, explains the emergence of trauma as:

> *[a]t the level of the collectivity, social crises must become cultural crises. Events are one thing, representations of these events quite another. Trauma is not the result of a group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity. Collective actors "decide" to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they want go.*[369]

For Alexander, cultural trauma is a mediatized process that is incorporated into the master narrative of that collectivity. In other words, it is a feature of identity politics, and the meanings attached to an event do not require a direct experience of that event. This is quite similar to Vamik Volkan's conceptualization of the 'chosen trauma' of large groups.[370] The difference between individual and cultural trauma is that that the former is embodied in the individual, while the latter is representational and, in some way, emotively symbolic. If a diagnosis of individual trauma aims to heal a person who suffers from an uncontrollable repeated resurfacing of a past event, then a diagnosis of cultural trauma aims to identify a threat to a social identity or society that cannot be healed by "working it through".[371] In contrast, when historical events are claimed to be cultural traumas, note that the carrier group often decides that a certain event (like the Irish Famine) or structure (like a colonialist regime) by definition constitutes a culturally traumatic event,[372] so that public discussion of it actually manifests the trauma and does not provide healing, but instead reinforces a negative affect towards identity.[373] While individual trauma is uncontrollable for the individual, cultural trauma, on the other, is very much a product of an actively pursued public agenda.

There is another dimension to cultural trauma. It has been suggested that denial of cultural trauma forms one additional expression of trauma on a collective level.[374] In other words, an event that is imposed on the public consciousness, as well as the neglect of a historical event or period, can be claimed to be a symptom of cultural trauma. For a historian, this naturally causes some concerns, as anything that he or she ventures can be classified as a symptom of trauma. Anything that is published could be seen as being published because of the topic's intrinsically traumatic nature, or anything that is rejected could be explained as due to the denial of a cultural trauma. Thus, the main difference between an individual trauma and cultural trauma is that the former can be diagnosed and treated, so that it disassociates the

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[369] Alexander 2004, 10.

[370] Volkan 2001, 87-89.

[371] Smelser 2004, 42.

[372] Alexander 2004.

[373] Smelser 2004, 52.53.

[374] Smelser 2004, 41-43.

past event from the ordinary and daily functions of a personality, while the latter is a politically motivated declaration of identity, a use of history that provokes contestation among groups in the present. The issues that it raises can never be resolved, because they can always be contested by someone.[375] If group A wants to discuss an event, group B do not want to discuss it, group C thinks that it has been discussed enough, and group D wants to discuss it another day: where is the cultural trauma? Is it in one of these groups or all of them together? Can the trauma be somehow resolved? No, it cannot. Therefore, as the discourse of the event constantly resurfaces in public consciousness, it can always be regarded as traumatic to someone. How many of these "someones" are there, and do they matter? The central question is what social status, or public and political influence, do they have? The actual event and its potentially traumatising effect on someone becomes a secondary concern.

Another issue that I have with 'cultural trauma' is its presumption that for a collectivity to experience a cultural trauma, it first has to be aware of its collective identity in order for it to feel threatened. And this is why it is problematic for nineteenth century societies and famines. Considering modern nationalism studies, as shall be discussed below, we cannot ascertain that there existed a widely and strongly shared national identity in either Ireland or Finland that could have been shocked and traumatized to its core at the time of the famines.[376] Nor can we take for granted that which forms basis for Volkan's chosen historical traumas, i.e. that within the large group there exists 'a shared mental representation' of the chosen traumatic past.[377]

If a shared mental representation of the famines in Ireland and Finland has ever existed, it did not come about during or in the immediate aftermath of the famines. First, the diversity of experiences would have to be forgotten, which would take time. How much time is a matter of contestation, but the upper limit is when those who can actually remember the event are no longer alive, i.e. approximately one hundred years. Beginning from the time of the event, this is a group of people that represents a constantly diminishing share of the total population. Prior to that endpoint in time, the group possessing the ability to remember acquires a specific but changing role of public, political, and social influence over society, which is contextually determined. It is also contextually determined whether those initially individual and distinct memories will at some point converge into a roughly similar and universal pattern. Secondly, the mediatization of historical narratives would have to converge too, somehow, and align with the individual memories, or at least not radically contest them, but perhaps replace or reaffirm them. The mediatization could be performed by the nation-state's monopolized uniform history curriculum (or state-monopolized broadcasting channels), which in

[375] Smelser 2004, 49-50.

[376] Similar ideas have been presented by Häkkinen 1987, 69.

[377] Volkan 2001, 87.

the case of Ireland did not take shape until the 1920s at the earliest [see article V]. In Finland, on the other hand, a uniform history curriculum for the Grand Duchy's schools was established from the beginning of the primary education reform in 1866. However, the schools did not effectively incorporate a whole generation of children until the late 1930s, and in any case the role of the 1860s famine in the textbook narratives was rather diminutive, in all but one example [see article IV]. Hence, a shared mental representation of an event is not something that automatically follows an event.[378] It requires at least a receptive audience that is willing to believe in a shared experience, and a communication and technological infrastructure that can deliver it.

Individuals, on the other hand, were certainly traumatized, but for a variety of reasons, and with a variety of symptoms. We can only assume that such a collective identity (as assumed by Alexander and Volkan) did develop later on, and that for example in the mid-twentieth century a cultural trauma in the manner that Alexander defines it could have been possible; in the case of Ireland, Alexander probably would agree that the Famine did eventually become a cultural trauma. However, we should not obfuscate the qualitative distinctions between individual reactions to a shock, the way in which some shocks caused individual psychopathological traumas for some (and in others with a delayed effect), and how a group of people imagine themselves as a community and invent a "trauma" that none of its member has ever experienced. This latter is a phenomenon that has a strong resemblance to nationalistic parlance, which I shall discuss below in further detail.[379] Nonetheless, the conceptual conflation of individually and potentially traumatic real experiences with subsequently socio-culturally manufactured victimhood by certain carrier groups advancing their own political goals in a later period, is not an ethically desirable categorization, nor analytically very illuminating.[380] In this sense, the famines should be considered only as temporal frame within which traumatic episodes may have occurred. Here we can remember the previously referenced quotation of Van den Berg and

[378] As a contrast, we can recall the shared mental representation of the terrorist attack on World Trade Center on September 11th 2001. What distinguishes that in a very profound way from the famines in the nineteenth century is that it was televised, and therefore the image of the plane crash into the second tower dominates the public representation of that event very forcefully. The famines of the nineteenth century did not produce a similar and hegemonic sequential imagery that was broadcast simultaneously far and wide. The majority of contemporary representations were textual, and only a limited amount of visual pictures were distributed, which gave more freedom to the readers' personal imaginations.

[379] See also Keen 2008, 83.

[380] Or, as Joseph Valente's critical dismantling of the ethnostalgic project manifested in the anthology Irish Hunger (edited by Tom Hayden and published 1998 Boulder: Rineheart): 'Selectively framed, the collective unconscious allows the essayist top draw lines of belonging and exclusion on the basis of ethnicity (Irish/not Irish) rather than traumatic phenomenology.' Valente 2014, 183. See also LaCapra 2001; and Visser 2011; Smelser 2004, 52–53.

Lindeboom: 'exposure to famine is not equivalent to exposure to a nutritional shortage',[381] or, we may add, to any other form of physical adversity associated with periods of distress.

3.4 FAMINE EXPERIENCES ARE TOO DIVERSE FOR GENERALIZATIONS OF TRAUMA

The famines under scrutiny include millions of individually distinctive experiences from the famine periods, and these cannot in any ethical way be trivialized under a common assumption of trauma for all.[382] Despite the fact that the majority of individuals witnessed, experienced, and survived (these are different categories of subjective experiences) horrendous episodes, only a few would have actually developed psychopathological trauma, because contrary to the predominant way of discussing trauma, people are in general resilient in their adaption to loss and potential trauma.[383] Studies on adult's psychological capacity for resilience against adversity show that only 5 to 10 per cent of the sample individuals showed signs of a delayed trauma, and this excludes those who were in denial about their trauma. Resilience researchers have therefore begun to speak of 'potentially traumatic events' instead of just assuming that everyone is traumatized, that an event is inherently traumatic, or that individuals are in a state of denial.[384] Furthermore, people respond to stress, loss, and grief in very individual ways.[385] These responses cannot automatically be categorized as signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as a variety of the symptoms can also be attributed to many other life-course developments.[386] For example, should silence be interpreted as a form of traumatic denial, pure ignorance, or deep silence?[387] Should the richness of

[381] Van den Berg and Lindeboom 2016, 7.

[382] On a similar note, but referring to Kai T. Erikson's sociological model of explaining how traumas disrupt societal tissues, see Valente 2014, 186-188.

[383] Bonanno 2004; Bonanno and Mancini 2006.

[384] See especially Zautra, Hall and Murray 2010; Mancini and Bonanno 2010.

[385] Bonanno and Kaltman 2001.

[386] Carlsson and Dalenberg 2000.

[387] On deep silence, see Löfstöm 2015. As a side note with regards to the Irish famine and its commemorations in the 1990s, although this point could also be extended with some modification to the Finnish context, a public discussion commenced over the supposed silence prevailing over Irish society about its most tragic event. There was a sense that the Famine had been forgotten or suppressed, and that commemorations 150 years after the event would somehow heal the wounds it had left behind. This portrayal of the Famine's role in the national psyche was eruditely criticized by social historian Niall O Ciosáin, who based his argument on famine historiography and folklore surveys. The point of his argument was that the silence, or abundance of it, in stories prevailing in post-famine society has to be measured against the available sources and narrative practices, including historiography, and the

famine fiction be interpreted as a pathological compulsion to revisit the Famine, on behalf of the author or the audience, or could it just be an attempt to profit from an existing market? Theorists of cultural trauma would immediately classify these as symptoms of trauma, but I would suggest that mnemohistory allows us to approach these matters in an analytically richer and nuanced manner. If we begin to see trauma everywhere we look, which the theory of cultural trauma allows us to do, then the concept becomes watered down and meaningless.

This suggests that we should avoid sweeping generalizations in assuming that a) the famine age-group is traumatized, and b) that the first post-famine generation would have shared a uniform postmemory or cultural trauma of their supposedly traumatized parents. The debates over Holocaust trauma concerning its distinctive experiences and the recognition of both the perpetrators and their victims (and their offspring) is good to keep in mind.[388] Diagnosing trauma for people in the past easily becomes a fig leaf for identity politics, including the possible repercussion of claims for legal and economic reparations.[389] This is something that certainly concerns postcolonial discourses, to which Irish scholarship has some connection.[390] The mnemohistory of famines must approach such discourses carefully. The famines included a large variety of individual experiences, of which the majority witnessed the symptoms of famine but did not necessarily suffer physically, or only experienced limited inconveniences, and this fact should not be forgotten by the scholar studying them. Mnemohistory include narratives wherein potential survival guilt was turned into a heroic tale of surviving adversity. Histories of famines often contain references to historical injustices in order to create a "we", often in order to justify some other political aims.[391] Scholars should not take these narratives at face value.

However, the strength in Hirsch's work is that she elaborates through microstudies how family stories and history, broadly understood, becomes connected to a narrative that increases the recognition of transgenerational identity. The idea of a transgenerational identity is important, especially when considering how national ideologues utilize it in their own politics of identity, as we will see in the next chapter. In addition, despite of my critique Hirsch does have another point that is useful to reiterate here. It is about considering the changing impact between the first, second, and third generation in shaping

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contrafactual scenario of how these would have evolved and been collected without a famine. See O Ciosáin 1995.

[388] Kansteiner 2004b, 107-111.

[389] Smelser 2004, 58-59.

[390] For example, Carroll and King 2003; McDonough 2005, Howe 2000.

[391] There are plenty of famines that have contested and to some degree politically charged or suppressed historical interpretations, e.g., the Indian famines under British rule (see in particular Davis 2002), the Ukrainian famine 1932-33, the Irish famine 1845-52, the Chinese famine 1959-62, and even the Finnish famine 1695-97 (Lappalainen 2012, 74-77).

transgenerational mnemohistory, not within the conceptual framework of memory or trauma, but regarding their willingness to interpret and understand their parents' and grandparents' lives. We may assume that the second generation in general would have had a more personal, deeper, and perhaps even a conflicting interest in their parents' experience of the Famine, because they would have carried a personal memory and an affective relationship to people who actually witnessed the crisis years. Cathal Póirtéir, who has studied the Irish folklore collections on the Famine, has noted that it is not unusual that oral transmission takes place more frequently from grandparent to grandchild, in other words jumping over one generation.[392] We may thus ask: did the second or the third generation's idea of the famine period manifest itself in any noticeable way, as compared to the famine cohort and the subsequent generations? The initial answer is a no, it did not, and to understand this lack of reaction we need to look more closely at the reality of the famine period itself [see article I and III]. However, the more refined answer includes some limited exceptions, where the second generation in fact may have played a leading role in perpetuating the famines in mnemohistory. And the third generation, much further removed from the famine period, was the one that initiated the commemoration of the famine on a local level by raising famine monuments. As the memory of the famine was fading along with the famine generation, erecting monuments would remind the post-famine generations of the famine's presence in the historical landscape. The function was to make the unimaginable (remembering something that one has not experienced oneself) visible in a landscaped shaped and transformed by history. The famine generations that could remember the famine taking place in their landscape did not really have any need to be reminded of something that they perhaps would have even rather forgotten. The memorial boom around the centenary of the famines required an experiential distance.

[392] Póirtéir 2012, 603.

4 IMAGINED COMMUNITIES AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY

> *The function of the teacher of History is much wider, however, than mere imparting of knowledge about the past and the present, since this subject can be made a valuable instrument for training the reasoning powers, firing the imagination and directing the will. In the hands of the good teacher its fruits are at least as much moral as mental. In an Irish school in which History is properly taught, the pupils will learn that they are citizens of no mean country, that they belong to a race that has a noble tradition of heroism, and persistent loyalty to ideals.*[393]

This study is based upon three pillars: mnemohistory, famine studies, and nationalism studies. For this last pillar, I am indebted to a wide range of scholars who have studied nationalism, nation-building, and identification with communities. The perspectives that I have gained from these fields have left their mark particularly on articles II, IV, and V, and in a more limited yet focused manner in article III. Here it is worth reviewing some of the fundamental perspectives I have gained from this field that have shaped my perception towards famines and mnemohistory, and that are vital if we are to understand the broader question of how historical famines interrelate with the process of nation-building from the nineteenth century onward, and how we can study them.

First, nations and states, and especially nation-states, are historical constructs formed in space and time. As exemplified in the quote above from the Irish Free State's *Notes for Teachers,* national identity and identification with (some chosen) ideals are not innate and existential features that humans are born with. They must be taught, cultivated, and inspired. In other words, they must be imagined through a narration of history that is greater than the past and the present. Schools that have a statewide outreach through many generations thus have the important task of inculcating this idea in the populace.[394] This is congruent with what the main authorities on nationalism studies have been telling us for the last thirty years.[395] The early educators and ideologues working during the early stages of modern nation-states were very well aware of this identity-shaping task.

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[393] An Roinn Oideachais, *Notes for Teachers,* 1933, 3.

[394] Carretero, Rodríguez-Moneo and Asensio 2012, 3; Carretero, Berger and Grever 2017.

[395] Leerssen 2006; Gellner 1983; Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm 1990; Hroch 1985; Smith 2009; Berger and Conrad 2015; Breuilly 1994.

Nationalism studies is often categorized between two schools of thought, i.e. the modernists[396] and primordialists (or perennialists), or what Anthony Smith has termed ethno-symbolists,[397] but this division should not be overstated.[398] Or, at least for this study, the categorization has a minor importance. The two schools diverge on certain points of emphasis regarding chronology, the role of elites, and a degree of semantics, but they are to a significant extent more or less complimentary with each other, and taken together they enrich our understanding of nationalism as a social and political phenomena in history.

It should be noted that ethnicities or ethnic differences have always had a political aspect and meaning to them, even in pre-modern societies.[399] The phenomenon of people dividing their social world into in- and out-groups is as old as the human species itself. However, it was not until the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century that that this phenomenon, ethnic identification or tribalism, begun to be associated with the nation, and thus began to have a wider political meaning that slowly attracted and encapsulated the masses into political participation and shaped the societal, economic, and political structures that gave rise to the modern nation-state.[400] The reciprocal relation between nation and state, and the conceptual conflation of nation, people, culture, and race as a rationale for political legitimacy and sovereignty, was presented as a doorway to modernity and emancipation for a 'chosen' population revived to nationhood in a world divided by nations.[401] During the nineteenth century the adjective 'national', as in 'national economy', 'national arts', and 'national traditions' became one of the most prominent ideas, inspiring scholarly and cultural interest and socio-political movements. Our current ideas and associations of what constitutes a nation-state are for the most part a legacy from that period.

4.1 THE NATION AS AN IMAGINED INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY

My understanding of nation follows Benedict Anderson's, that a 'nation is an imagined political community'.[402] It must be imagined due to its size and scale, because no member of it can have direct contact with every other member of that nation, and therefore the community becomes an abstraction that must

[396] For instance, Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, and Eric Hobsbawm are those most often referred to as modernists, or as belonging to a social constructivist school of thought.

[397] See for example Smith 2009, Gat and Yakobson 2013, Roshwald 2001.

[398] E.g. Gat and Yakobson 2013, 7.

[399] Gat and Yakobson 2013, 3-10; Eriksen 2010; 46-53.

[400] Hroch 1985; Hobsbawm 1990; Gellner 1983; Gat 2013; Hill 2008.

[401] Hill 2008.

[402] Anderson 1991, 6.

be imagined. Its backbone lies in the belief that a group of people share a number of characteristics, and who therefore supposedly feel a certain loyalty towards their own fellow members.[403]

It is noteworthy that, when stating that communities are imagined, we should not misinterpret "imagined" as standing for unreal or a fantasy. The post-modern turn, or the linguistic-turn inspired by Hayden White's work and followed by Frank Ankersmit and Keith Jenkins, and often oversimplified by other theorists of historiography, should not be interpreted as a consensus statement by professional historians that everything is relative, that no facts exist, and that everything is determined by narration alone.[404] There are too many shallow and hasty assumptions made in such a conclusion. The point that I want make is that language and metaphors (and narration) makes the world we live in comprehensible and provides us with a perspective, a way of thinking, and to some extent determines how we humans consciously and unconsciously structure our beliefs, thoughts, and actions.[405] Imagination is what makes the world cognitively real. I adhere to a social constructivist philosophy, as presumably most contemporary historians that use empirical sources do.[406]

It also generally accepted among scholars that a nation is an imagined intergenerational community, that it is inspired by a belief in common descent, a shared point of origin, or even kinship, which is why representations and narratives of the past are central to every nation.[407] This compulsive emphasis on the element of descent is sometimes referred to as ethnic nationalism, in which the role of racial and biological heritage plays a key role.[408] The supposed alternative is civic nationalism, in which nationhood is believed to be determined mainly according to a shared belief in or commitment to a set of values and traditions, and is therefore thought to be more inclusive and liberal toward outsiders than ethnic nationalism is. However, this division is modestly superficial, or a question of semantic emphasis, because traditions and values are not only confined to imagined cultural boundaries. They transcend family life too. Hence, civic nationalism

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[403] Anderson 1991; Yack 2012.

[404] White 1973; Ankersmit 2012; Jenkins 2003.

[405] See especially Lakoff and Johnson 2003; but also on how metaphors intrude and direct the way we think about philosophical issues. Lakoff and Johnson 1999. And how metaphors direct moral politics and society. Lakoff 2002.

[406] Berger and Luckmann 1994; Grever and Adriaansen 2017, 76-77; Robinson 2011; Hyvärinen 2006; Lorenz 1999. Alan Robinson encapsulated this beautifully. "What is examined is the circular process of the social construction of reality: cultural representations are understood as immaterial events with material consequences, in that they not only articulate but also shape how contemporaries seek to make sense of their environment and thus influence social practices, which are in their turn mediated in further cultural representations." Robinson 2011, 18.

[407] Yack 2012, 68; Gat 2013; Smith 2009; Leerssen 2006.

[408] For example, Roshwald 2001, 5.

is not isolated from nor immune to the persuasion of intergenerational and culturally inherited emotively loaded artefacts and value systems.[409] In addition, family and kinship metaphors remain persuasive in all forms of nationalistic or patriotic rhetoric, e.g. the concept of *patria*, which is a literal example of family values transcending social identification, underlining the importance of descent, kinship, and even blood ties.[410]

My critique of postmemory, cultural memory, and cultural trauma is partially linked to a critique of nationalism. Both discourses theorize about intergenerational identities and what kind of meanings are attached to artefacts and rituals that evoke that identity. However, what I have gained from nationalism studies is the idea that the concept of intergenerational community should be open to criticism. In my view, every intergenerational community is imagined, because the ancestors who belong to the dead past can only be revived through imagination. The criticism of national communities, i.e. their imaginative and constructive nature, should apply to the study of all identity discourses, especially when intergenerational aspects are involved. Scholars of post- or cultural memory should take that notion into serious consideration.

National identity refers to a person's identification to and with a certain nation. This identification is based upon a real or perceived shared kinship and culture.[411] However, how one perceives ones' own identity is not necessarily the same as how one is classified in the categories of others. In addition, this becomes easily blurred when a temporal distance is added to the observer's perspective. For instance, nineteenth century Finnish immigrants to the United States of America were often documented there as immigrants from Russia,[412] because Finland was a part of Russia, but there is no evidence that they would have felt Russian. Linguistically they were either Finnish or Swedish-speakers, or both. This categorization may even have been totally irrelevant to the persons themselves, but viewed from our present day way of discussing and conceptualizing national identities it becomes a great puzzle as to how we should categorize them. In a similar manner, landlords in mid-nineteenth century Ireland were considered Irish in the eyes of the English public, but foreign in the rhetoric of Irish nationalists [see article III and article V]. So, who should we trust on this matter? The landlords themselves?

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[409] See also Yack 2012, 27; Kymlicka 1999, 133.

[410] Hogan 2009, 124-166; Lakoff 2002, 153-161.

[411] See Gat's definition of a population's ethnicity, which is similar to what most scholars would apply to the definition of a nation. 'By ethnicity I mean a population of shared kinship (real or perceived) and culture.' Gat 2013, 3. See also, Eriksen 2010.

[412] U.S. Census Bureau, Table 4. Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population, With Geographic Detail Shown in Decennial Census Publications of 1930 or Earlier: 1850 to 1930 and 1960 to 1990: https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab04.html (last visited 10.10.2019).

Perhaps, but what if they disagreed among themselves on how they identified themselves? How about when generational identities cross: when the children identify differently than their parents, what identity label should could apply to both of them? Similar examples of situations where national identity is contested, but nationality is fixed, are widespread. This leads me to distinguish between a discursive mode of national identity, a subjective identity, and an externally imposed nationality.

National identity is a discourse within a wider identity discourse that manifests in a group of people. For instance, how national identity is related to other identities that a person has: family, religion, language, class, gender, and others. National identity can never be explicitly defined, only debated in roundabout ways, as what kind of cultural traits, memories, history, landscapes, and values supposedly belong to a particular national identity, and what does not belong to it. It involves a wide range of cultural traditions, linguistic heritage, mentalities, 'chosen traumas',[413] and so forth. I chose to call it a discursive mode, because it is the discourse itself, more than its content, which keeps the identity salient: what kind of foods or landscapes should be considered part of a national identity and heritage, and so forth. The manifestation of this discursive mode in Finnish literary representations is explored in article II, and for the Irish case in chapter five. Consequently, the contestation around certain aspects of national identity is not a threat towards national identity in itself, because it only strengthens its importance in the present, its emotiveness, and visibility. Subjective identity, on the other hand, can include whatever a person feels as his or her identity, of which national identity is only one among many others, and not necessarily even an important one.

Subjective identity is an expression of oneself, but it is also an expression of an affinity for a collective. It is a feeling that need not to be reciprocal. I can think of myself as a musician, but unless other musicians regard me as their equal, then the identification remains a strictly subjective experience. An immigrant can desire to be part of the receiving community and identify with it, but the feeling may not be mutually shared within the community. Identity is affected and (re-)created socially with a social purpose, but it is not necessarily constrained by others.[414] Therefore, a subjective identity that does not receive the kind of reaffirmation that it wants may lead to serious psychological conflict that can have grave social consequences, including aggravated tension and discrimination between in- and out- groups.

In contrast, nationality, as with any social identity, is the public classification of one's social identity. People can have several social identities intersecting and overlapping one another (e.g. father, wife, fan of FC Barcelona, entrepreneur, voluntary worker, social activist, dog owner), but it is typical for nationality to strive to be on the top of the identity hierarchy, as

[413] Volkan 2001.

[414] Burke and Stets 2009; Hogan 2009, 23-65.

it is a reflection of discursive national identity.[415] Because nationality is congruent with the boundaries of the public sphere, and is a reflection of the mental geography of the populace, it follows that nationality becomes central only when the public sphere and the mental geography are framed in national terms. Nowadays, we can think of a televised news report, which often has a clear rhetorical distinction between foreign and domestic news, often ending with the geographically presented weather forecast of the nation-state. This is banal nationalism.[416] Prior to the centrality of the nation, other social identity categories such as local, regional, or imperial may have occupied the centre ground in the mental geography of a populace. During the time scale that this study incorporates, the 1850s to the 1960s, the meaning of nationality is therefore the most amenable, fluid, and changing of social identity concepts. What was meant by nationality in the mid-nineteenth century is not as self-evident as it seems to be a hundred years later.

Nationality is how the social environment defines a person's relation to a nation. It is the (semi-) official recognition of being entitled to the same rights and duties as your fellow nationals. It is what nationalists and nationalism are striving towards when they seek political sovereignty for a nation. It derives its mass support from the idea of creating an equal society for all of its national members through a shared nationality. The most contentious issue is how it selects its in-group. Its mnemo-technique relies upon shaping the public sphere and society to converge within a national frame and focus. To this end, certain state and social institutions, such as military, education, expanding print capitalism, traditions, and local governance had to be recalibrated as representatives of a national endeavour. Sometimes this took shape in opposition to imperial governments, sometimes by turning the imperial core into national units, and sometimes by reinterpreting a regional, administrative, or loosely territorialized ethnic composition into a nation deserving its own state-structure. In legal terms, nationality is usually manifested as citizenship,[417] but because of the timescale used in this study the concept of citizenship is difficult to apply consistently in settings that are not republics, and because its meaning changed and its sense of inclusivity expanded rapidly. However, to the extent that the state has the official monopoly on defining nationality, the discourse and dissemination of nationality can be studied through state-sanctioned textbooks, as I have done in article IV and V.

[415] Hogan 2009.

[416] Billig 1995.

[417] Yakobson 2013, 330.

4.2 NATIONALISM AND PATRIOTISM

The concept of nation (from the Latin *natio*) is itself an old concept that has existed since antiquity.[418] National*ism*, on the other hand, is much younger, primarily appearing in public print form in the late nineteenth century.[419] In Finnish scholarship, nationalism has often been conceptualized as "kansallisuusaate", which translates as the ideology of nationhood, echoing a more defensive patriotism than the word "nationalism" implies.[420] These concepts have an ambiguous and slippery nature, with many meanings attached to them. Some differences are contextual, and others conceptual. Importantly, modern scholars of nationalism see nationalism very differently in comparison to how self-described nationalists sees it.[421]

Nationalism arises when the discourse on national identity becomes explicitly manifested as political goals, with the intent of creating or upholding a nation-state for a particular nation (or a people, ethnicity, race, or just a group of people).[422] Nationalism requires the mobilization of those members of the masses that its agents want to incorporate into their definition of nationality. The difference between nationalism and a nationalistic enthusiast is that that the former can write a poem in favour of nationalistic ideals, but it does not constitute an act of nationalism until it is distributed widely among its target audience. The aim is political, i.e. to shape society and its external relations accordingly, although it may often be disguised as a cultural movement to avoid explicit political clashes. Moreover, it should be recognized that nationalism is often preceded or led by individual nationalists, or scholars and artists enthused by things perceived as containing elements of the true nation, and these are not necessarily acts of nationalism, no matter how nationalistic the content is. It all depends upon how they manage to mobilize the masses for their cause.[423]

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[418] Leerssen 2006; Berger and Conrad 2015, 7.

[419] Kettunen 2018.

[420] See for example Jussila 1979, 17; Fewster 2006, 42.

[421] Leerssen 2006, 16; Anderson 1991, 5; Kettunen 2018.

[422] In this regard I follow to Joep Leerssen's utilization of the term: 'nationalism… that political ideology which is based on the combination of the three assumptions: a. that the "nation" is the most natural, organic collective aggregate of humans, and the most natural and organic subdivision of humanity; and that, as such, the nation's claim to loyalty overrides all other allegiances; b. that the state derives its mandate and sovereignty from its incorporation of a constituent nation, so that civic loyalty to the state is a natural extension of "national" (cultural, linguistic, ethnic) solidarity; c. that territorially and socio-politically, the most natural and organic division of humankind into states runs along "national" (cultural, linguistic, ethnic) lines, so that ideally there is a seamless overlap between the outlines of the state and of its constituent nation.' Leerssen 2006, 14.

[423] Compare to Hroch's categorization of different phases in national movements. Hroch 1985. Also Hobsbawm 1990; Gellner 1983, 8-52.

Nationalism is thus a concept incorporating a broad sliding scale, but the way that I use it always refers to a political mass movement that claims to speak the nation, or an attempt to create or preserve one.[424] As with any other -ism, it refers to a political ideology that consciously strives to shape society and the state in accordance with its activist's - i.e. the leaders of the national movement - definition of nation and national identity. It aims to create new traditions and a new sense of community, or to reconceptualize old ones to be perceived as national, and thus gives nationality a hegemonic character compared to other social identities.[425] The leadership of these national activists may be contested by contemporaries, but it is in the nature of nationalism, as with any other political movement, to keep up the appearances of a unified and coherent mass movement, which is why successful national movements often forget or whitewash their internal discords when writing their own historical narratives [see articles IV and V]. Nationalism is the action of people who try to impose their interpretation of national identity upon others, and exclude those who it does not count as 'us'. It strives to be the hegemonic, and the dominant identity in an identity hierarchy.[426]

In the nineteenth century's evolving democracies, the concept of nation often became associated with a loosely defined "people", as in the double meaning of the Finnish word "kansa", often referring to both the nation and the Finnish speaking people (with a peasantry background). Similarly, "race" could be used as a synonym for nation, as in the example of 'the Celtic race'. In Finland, this conceptualization of race did not become widespread. Because 'the national awakening'[427] was more or less assimilated into the other major cultural-political transformations at that time, i.e. modernity and state-building, it made nationalism appear distinct from many other political ideologies. It could potentially unite or transcend competing political groupings such as liberals, conservatives, socialists, and others. Scholars of nationalism often view such instances as a kind of secular religion focused on kinship.[428] This may take shape in advancing a particular type of seemingly apolitical cultural symbols, traditions, and customs: festivities, high culture, 'national' sciences, 'national' costumes, 'national' literature and arts, acts of collective remembrance, a particular type of linguistic variety, a particular type of economic activity, a particular type of folklore, and other cultural traits. In addition, it requires a routine of continuous flag-waving and pledging of allegiance to that nation.[429] For Ireland in the late nineteenth century, such activity has often been characterized as cultural nationalism, or in reference to

[424] Compare to Hobsbawm 1990, 101-162.

[425] Kurumäki and Marjanen 2018.

[426] Hogan 2009.

[427] Note the activation of the metaphor 'nation as a person' in this conceptualization, i.e. 'the people' becoming conscious of their nationhood.

[428] Anderson 1991, 5; see also Brubaker 2012, 2-20; Brubaker 2013, 1-20.

[429] Billig 1995.

literary circles as the Irish revival. The activities of the Gaelic league would fall neatly into this categorization. Similar processes took shape in Finland, with the *Kansanvalistusseura* leading attempts to establish a literary tradition in the Finnish language.

However, such actions by the subjects themselves would rarely be described as acts of nationalism, but as acts of another -ism, that is patriotism.[430] And the success of patriotism (from the Latin *patria*, fatherland) lays in its metaphorical activation of a territory bound to families and through generations, and therefore the past. Patriotism is a form of 'banal nationalism' that on the one hand reminds people of their linkage to their father's territory and keeps their national identification firmly alive, and on the other hand refurnishes their nationalism as patriotism, and consequently reserves the concept of nationalism only for others.[431] From an analytical point of view there is not much of difference between nationalism and patriotism. However, the target of the study, nationalists, often want to make a normative distinction between "our" good patriotism versus "their" bad nationalism.

4.3 SHARED PASTS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNITY

The idea of a shared past is the starting point of a communal bond, and all communities (including nations) replicate this idea.[432] If they would not do this, then they would simultaneously stop being a community. Therefore, communities create 'mythscapes' that repeatedly narrate that past and keep alive the belief of a shared past,[433] and the larger the community then the symbolic and ethno-symbolic representations of tropes become all the more important - persons and events that entangle that master narrative with personal memories.[434] Symbols are flexible, as they allow room for personal interpretation without spelling out explicit interpretational differences. Hence, persons and events that have been meaningful in a relatively similar way for a number of people often become prominent themes or topics in such narratives.[435] Events or persons that are associated with an easily narratable, memorable, and intimately identifiable history *of us* and history *for us* form key points in these master narratives. Their myth-like status is often manifested in evocative symbolism;[436] in simple concepts like years (1847 in Ireland, or 1918 in Finland), flag-waving, representations of political

[430] Kettunen 2018.

[431] Billig 1995.

[432] Hammack and Pilecki 2012; Zerubavel 2003.

[433] Bell 2003.

[434] Berger 2008; Gat 2013; Smith 2009; Billig 1995; Rigney 2008; Weigel 2008.

[435] Hogan 2009.

[436] Billig 1995; see also Zerubavel 2003; Smith 2009.

boundaries through maps, statutes, places, proverbs and sayings ('Peel's brimstone', a passage of time as 'long as the hunger year') that make sense to the community but not necessarily to its neighbours, particular foods (potato and barkbread) that have associative meanings with poverty, and artefacts, rituals, traditions (i.e. national holidays) and all kinds of narratives that can easily activate and emotionally engage their community by implying a supposed continuity to the past.[437] Wars form a typical example of such events, because they entangle the individual sacrifices of lost family members with a societal sacrifice for the nation state. Even if members do not know each other, they have a similar family story to commemorate, which enhances their sense of a shared past and shared purpose, to keep that memory alive in the present and the future.[438] This gives rise to commemorational rituals, or what Paul Connerton calls commemorative ceremonies.[439] During national holidays, war commemorations of the sacrificial victims form a prime example of such activity.

Famines, however, are not recognizably and unequivocally such events. Simple mnemotechnical symbols hide their socially internal complexities and paradoxes, and allude to the effect of famine's destructive force on the cohesion of community. They are not sudden events, like battles - unless we narrow our scope to a very precise microlevel, e.g. landlord vs. tenant, or a domestic household's reallocation of scarcity and power - but are processes of social and political failure more like extreme economic depressions, where the enemy is premature death and victory is about succeeding in avoiding it, but for how long one may ask. Even in good times the majority of people do not want to die, and every death, even in old age, can be thought of as 'too early' if you ask those whom it concerns the most. Because famines are failures, they become politically sensitive issues. Famines give rise to what Roxanne Rimstead calls 'poverty narratives' that question the unity of a shared national experience. 'When the poor speak out as remnants of the nation, national unity seems frayed or non-existent, and the relational logic between the poor and the wealthy nation is more apparent.'[440] Importantly, the tragedies of famine are confronted by the individual, but community histories have their focus on the social aspect through the evidence of survivors and witnesses. This gives the affluent classes, and especially if they are ideologically committed to national or some other kind of communal unity, enough reasons to engage in selective mnemohistory; i.e. to forget or whitewash a range of disturbing famine episodes [see articles II and V].

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[437] Compare with Eric Hobsbawm's definition: "'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past." Hobsbawm 1983, 1. See also Zerubavel 2003.

[438] Winters 2006.

[439] Connerton 1989, 41-71.

[440] Rimstead 2001, 6.

Famines incorporate a plethora of experiences where social demarcations are strained and made visible, but on a macrolevel they do not form into a simplistic battle line division, us-versus-them, which could be widely accepted, and in doing so would trigger a process towards the reconstruction of society, akin to a revolution. On an individual level, the 'enemies' are certainly real, and folklore sources in particular are abundant with vicious grain speculators, landlords, government officials, neighbours, migrants, beggars, thieves, the nobility, the priests, the wealthy, other ethnic groups, and even God, Satan, wild-animals, or nature. However, this long list of dispersed 'enemies' is what might explain why some famines do not develop into violent and politically targeted conflict. The social anxiety is real, but its potential targets are too dispersed for a coherent narrative to gain enough credibility that could lead to a coordinated political movement. Had that been the case, then we would not historicise them as "famines", but probably under categories such as wars, rebellions, revolutions, etc, that were triggered by economic problems, in which case the "famine-ness" becomes marginalized, as in the case of the Finnish Civil War.[441] Ireland is a case in point, because in the 1840s it did have a political repeal movement led by the aging Daniel O'Connell, centred upon the idea of Ireland as separate nation from Britain. However, during the famine its leadership disintegrated and the movement fell apart. The national revolution that the more hawkish flank of its leaders envisioned did not receive nationwide popular support, and erupted only to the anti-climax of a minor rebellion in Widow McCormack's cabbage garden that lasted less than four hours.[442] The symbolism of rebellion, however, became more important in the longer tradition of Irish failed rebellions (1798, 1848, 1867, 1916) than the significance of the event itself at the time. In retrospect, the fact that at least there had been an attempt to (re-)create Thomas Davis' dream of Ireland as "a nation once again" had an important value for nationalists.

4.3.1 NATION-BUILDING AND SCHOOLING

Wherever and whenever communities have sought to preserve future-oriented continuity, they put effort into the upbringing, education, and indoctrination of new members, often with an emphasis on a shared history.[443] The purpose of history education is the instillation of a social identity, a sense of "we" and "they" that transcends generations. For territorially fixed communities most of the new members are children. For centuries in Europe religious communities were the main providers of education, although according to the church's own ambitions, needs and resources.[444]

[441] Voutilainen 2017, 187-188.

[442] Kinealy 2009, 200-201.

[443] Carretero, Rodríguez-Moneo and Asensio 2012: López and Carretero 2012; Korostelina 2013.

[444] Power 1991, 186.

In the nineteenth century, the state began to take a leading role in setting the rules and aims for established educational institutions, and in some places even replacing them with direct control. Financial endowments provided significant leverage and influence in local communities. In a European context, the main point of concern was the question of how to align the traditional role of the church's educational endeavours with those of the state.[445] Here, every state had a preferred relationship with a church with which to negotiate, and which determined, influenced, and shaped how the curriculum would be formed. Religious societies were in general suspicious of inviting what they perceived as secular or heretical values in their traditional domain of cultivating appropriate ethical conduct in their flock. However, depending on the context such issues were often in one way or the other negotiated and settled. One way of appeasing churches, beside direct state subsidies, was to construct a curriculum that gave religious instruction a substantial role.

The state's intervention in education was part of a broader societal and political development of enlarging democratic participation, combating social segregation, implanting loyalism towards the prevailing social and political order, and unifying the state's subjects under the common banner of a developing nation-state.[446] It too had profound consequences in terms of homogenizing regional linguistic differences and knowledge systems for a large part of the population. The acculturation through schools that in France turned 'peasants into Frenchmen' was a universal phenomenon, occurring in Finland as well as in Ireland.[447] Wherever it advanced, the state-supported educational schemes challenged and shaped the local educational monopoly traditionally held by parents and locally powerful clergy and patrons.

The National System of Education in Ireland, founded in 1831 on the principle of providing a non-denominational elementary education for Irish children, is a case in point [see also article V]. It aimed to combat the potential dangers that an embittered Roman Catholic-led school system could represent for the unity of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The aim was to facilitate a peaceful intermingling and co-existence between different denominations through the exclusion of denominational instruction and symbols from schools, or in the words of Thomas Wyse, 'to prepare future Citizens for a common country.'[448] Any school that wanted the financial support of the state treasury had to abide by the rules, including using only the textbooks approved by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, a board where each congregation had representation. This was a school system designed for Ireland, but financed by the Treasury in London.[449]

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[445] Brockliss and Sheldon 2012, 1-13; Hobsbawm 1990, 80-100.

[446] Gemie 2009.

[447] Weber 1976, 303-338; see also Ahonen and Rantala 2001, 11.

[448] Wyse quoted in Lyons 2014, 50.

[449] Coolahan 1981; Akenson 1970; Coleman 2007; O'Neill 2017.

However, some school systems did not want to join this system, mainly due to fear that it infringed upon their own preferred religious-pedagogical ethos. The (Protestant) Established Church set up its own system in 1839, the Church Educational Society, to keep 'popery' out of its classrooms.[450] Similarly, the Christian Brothers, after a few experimental years, removed their schools from the National Commissioners endowments in order to guard their Catholic ethos, which was seen as incompatible with the National system.[451] Despite these obstacles, the Nationals System grew rapidly in total numbers of operating schools, enrolments, and average daily attendance.[452] However, during the latter half of the nineteenth century it began to receive more and more criticism for disregarding national topics in its curriculum, such as Irish history, literature, and geography, and the Irish language. In this regard the Christian Brothers' Roman Catholic Schools were often represented, especially in nationalist press, as manifesting a true oppositional force with regards to education, and a nationalist alternative. Indeed, the Christian Brothers did include Irish history and geography and more Irish topics in their school texts, although one may question how 'nationalistic' they really were. As discussed in article V, there is a tendency among Irish scholars to exaggerate the scope, depth, and duration of the nationalism found in Christian Brothers' education,[453] which hinders recognition of the system's inherent similarities with the National schools. Nevertheless, the issue of schooling was a major concerns within nationalist circles, because of its centrality in instilling the hearts and minds of Irish youth with an Irish identity.[454]

We encounter a similar story in the Grand Duchy of Finland, although religious segregation was not a point for concern, mainly because the country was overwhelmingly Lutheran [see articles I and IV]. However, in 1865 the educational provision was transferred from the parish's voluntary practices to the voluntary practice of the municipal authorities, financially supported by the Grand Duchy's treasury. Educational segregation, in the context of folk schools, took the form of the two language groups (Finnish and Swedish), which were to be educated in their own languages but with an otherwise identical curriculum.[455] In contrast to the non-denominational aim in Ireland, where the National system was seen as a compromise that pleased no one, the Finnish linguistic pillarization did not cause public resentment, but in general pleased both interest groups and their identity building projects. Both language groups remained within the same administrative structures and leadership, and beyond the language of instruction their main difference was, as Max Engman noted, that the Swedish school system had the autonomy to

[450] Coolahan 1981, 14-19.

[451] Keogh 2008, 211-224; Coldrey 1988.

[452] Akenson 1970, 140, 198, 220-224.

[453] E.g. Foster 2001, 9.

[454] E.g Patrick Pearse, see Walsh 2007.

[455] Kuikka 1997; Myllyntaus 1990.

replace the Finnish mythical hero Väinämöinen with the Scandinavian Odin.[456]

The main issue of concern was not about the language of instruction, but to what extent the wealthier classes were willing to contribute to the education of the lower classes. The compromise founded in the 1860s was that parishes would receive state support for establishing a school, but the parish would have to finance the upkeep and teacher's salary from their own budget. On the local level this would mean pressure to raise the local tax rate, and thus the expansion of the folk school system advanced sluggishly.[457] Furthermore, the state supported the educational program by instigating a number of teacher training boarding schools, with separate systems for each language group, and thus it took the leading role in providing a steady supply of professionally qualified teachers, which would play the enlightenment role of torchbearers in rural communities.[458]

As discussed in articles IV and V, teaching history was seen as an important part, or even an essential part, of the curriculum. Teaching reading, writing, and counting were technical subjects, but history had the function of integrating the individual into a transgenerational community. It taught one's place in society, and in the chain of being.[459] In addition, it provided the historical raw material and historical background for religious instruction.[460] To the extent that education was supposed to cultivate ideals of moral conduct and ethical virtues for each generation, so that they could orient themselves through life without revolting against the social order, history provided suitable ingredients in the form of historical analogies and personas.

The divisive question was, what kind of history and for whom? The textbooks used in the national schools in Ireland were foremost an elementary reading of biblical history that merged into a history of civilization, with the pinnacle being the defeat of Napoleon by the British Empire, the beacon of human progress [see specifically article V]. This was a very brief and narrow narrative, with the essential aim of instilling respect for the British Empire. Irish nationalists hated this, because they saw it as an attempt to anglicize Irish children. However, what they did not see was that the exclusion of national history also occurred with English history in English schools. In the British Empire the common identity was Christian heritage, which required a very limited historical or cultural history. This was regarded as sufficient for the lower classes, and history inclusive of politics and diplomacy were reserved for the education of statesmanship. National history did not become part of the curriculum until 1899, and even then it was a voluntary subject. Consequently, to the Irish nationalist critics, the National school system represented an evil

[456] Engman 2016a, 195.

[457] Rahikainen 2011, 370–378.

[458] Meinander 2001.

[459] Carretero, Rodríguez-Moneo and Asensio 2012.

[460] Anderson 1991, 5-15; Marsden 1993; see also Brubaker 2012.

brainwashing attempt with the goal of undermining Irish nationality. Patrick Pearse called it the Murder Machine.[461] In the end, the Irish Free State established national history as an independent subject, a development that coincided with the Christian Brothers returning to a reformed National system that gave local congregations quite a free hand in shaping their schooling according to their own preferences. In practice, this meant giving the Catholic Church considerable influence over educational matters.

In the Grand Duchy of Finland, the folk school reform from 1865 immediately accepted the inclusion of history in the curriculum, but divided the subject into national history and general history [for more on this, see article IV]. National history was aimed at instilling a patriotic pride, a sense of belonging to a national community, and exemplary behaviour in the form of the genius of great men in national history. In this sense the folk school curriculum in Finland would probably have been much envied by Irish nationalists had they known about it.

In Finland, the textbooks during the period of autonomy had to be, first and foremost, politically acceptable to Russian imperial authorities, and secondly to domestic political sensitivities. The Board of Education gave their approval of which textbooks could be used. And something of the important place that history was given in the curriculum can be seen in the fact that the person occupying the position of the chairman of the Board of Education, at least from the 1860s to the late 1920s, was always simultaneously the author of the most used history textbook in the teacher training seminars at that time. National history was important, and so was the supervision of its teaching in the eyes of the authorities. Unsurprisingly, during the Years of Oppression from 1899 to 1917 one of the Russian breaches of previous practice (among others) that the Finnish national movement was opposed to was the inclusion of Russian history alongside the other history subjects [article IV].

History matters, and when communities feel threatened, they seek shelter in ensuring that "their" history is "appropriately" taught to their popular base. Nation-building and history education are intimately entwined. The educational history of both countries under consideration here displays the universal aims and desires for history's role in nation-building. With regards to the incorporation of the famines into the national history as taught in schools, the countries certainly diverged, not least on the meanings attached to "nation" and "history", and the broader significance attributed to the famine event evolved in due course.

[461] Pearse 1913.

4.4 COLLECTIVE 'TRAUMA' AS A MANIFESTATION OF DISCURSIVE IDENTITY, NOT FAMINE

The language of cultural or collective memory, when it lacks a clear specification of the social unit in question, is for this reason also problematic. Nationalist rhetoric often claims to be the voice of the people, by the people, and for the people, which is why this metaphor, which entangles the nation with an embodied entity (i.e. the nation as a person), is frequently used. But there is no rational reason for why we as famine scholars should accept this metaphor and the arguments it follows. Famine throws a dark shadow over the cosy assumption of the nation as a healthy, strong, and caretaking collective instilled with solidarity and shared responsibility.[462] Furthermore, to the extent that the realities of famine often challenge the ideal harmony of a family household providing sustenance to all family members, as in the works of Pietari Päiwärinta or Johan Runeberg [article II], the family metaphor for national survival also becomes historically questionable. In addition, the metaphor also often applies a teleological argument, where the current definition of the cultural unit or nation is extrapolated to social units in the past, which are often historically incorrect. If the difference between an Irish and a British identity nowadays is uncontested (which is not always the case, at least not in Northern Ireland), then that difference was much more blurred and fluid while Ireland formed an integral part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland [see article V].

Trauma can only be explained through an acknowledgement of an external causation that has permanently shaken one's identity.[463] The only way for community activists to come to terms with this "trauma" is by shifting the blame of the shock to an outsider, to an extrinsic agent, which can somehow explain that scar on the nation's body.[464] It is the only way to make sense of trauma. Hence, contemporary popular history debates in Ireland still frequently refer to the malevolent character and supposedly bad intentions of the British government. Intellectually, this belief is further enhanced by scholars who uncritically apply psychoanalytic language to the study of the Irish famine. That is, as long as the Irish Famine is perceived and conceptualized through the concept of trauma, the search for the agents that caused it will continue. On the other hand, the case of Finland suggests that by not even recognizing the existence of a collective trauma, one can simultaneously evade any considerations of an external force that would have

[462] Rimstead 2001.

[463] Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines trauma: 1a. 'an injury (such as a wound) to living tissue caused by an extrinsic agent'. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/trauma (last visited 31.10.2018).

[464] As Bernard Shaw explained the Irish occupation by means of Irish nationalism: 'A healthy nation is as unconscious of its nationality as a healthy man of his bones. But if you break a nation's nationality it will think of nothing else but having it set again.' Shaw 1962 [1907], 55.

caused it. If there is no trauma, then there is no motivation to explain what caused it in the first place. And yet, we should never forget that both famines involved thousands and thousands of individually experienced horrendous events, that most certainly would have traumatized at least some of the persons involved.

Speaking of famine and its casualties in terms of trauma, but without an external cause, would require a recognition that the perceived imagined community was not so equal and loyal as the embodied metaphor would have us think. If the nation was be thought of as a person, then for the sake of consistency a famine that kills would mean that that nation-person has committed a self-amputation, which would leave the nationalist with a permanently injured, deformed, and a scarred portrayal of the nation. That is not a very appealing image that people would want to identify with, unless they prefer the role of victimhood, which again implies an external culprit. On the other hand, including the famine in a continuum of struggle against an outsider explains the injuries of the nation. In the language of cultural memory theorists, it would have to be called a traumatized nation.[465]

However, my conclusion is that the discussion in that instance stops being a discourse about famine, and shifts to an identity discourse about in- and out-groups, and who belongs to the nation. This is very apparent in the Irish case and the narratives where the British government is blamed for its mismanaged famine relief, and it can even be detected in Finnish mnemohistory, although in Finland it does not take the form of national-identity discourse but a regional-, local-, and in a rare instance ethnic-identity discourse. As a continuation from the debates during the famine of "our" poor and the "others'" poor, as explored in chapter 2, it was typical of Finnish local histories to argue that the home parish would have coped much better if only the wandering poor from elsewhere would not have overburdened their own relief capacity.[466] This too is one example of the importance of remembering that the imagined communities under discussion are not always explicitly national, but include a wide array of different identifications in different layers. During the Finnish famine some local communities made an explicit municipal decision to deny or even to ban famine relief for wandering beggars originating from other parishes,[467] which was a total refutation of the idea of national loyalty towards one's own countrymen and -women. This implies that the concept of 'Finnish nationality' was not thoroughly ingrained in the mental geography of

[465] See also Kettunen 2008, 38-39.

[466] For example, the local history of Hausjärvi recalls the intrusion of neighbouring beggars from Janakkala in 1866, which depleted the meagre but supposedly sufficient harvest of that year. Keskitalo 1964, 601.

[467] Even today, Laihia municipality prides itself on the virtue of their own miserly character, in Finnish known as "laihialainen nuukuus". Laihia, "Unelmista nuukailematta", https://www.laihia.fi/tietoa_laihiasta (last visited 5.9.2018).

the rural populace,[468] i.e. local and class identity prevailed here and there, in spite of how it was perceived amongst the educated elite.

Consequently, speaking of cultural memory in terms of national memory also conceals the variety of memories that an event like a famine leaves in its wake. A social crisis with food shortages and epidemics leading to high mortality rates is a crisis that is primarily confronted on a micro level, even if the relief efforts are organized on a state or global level. It is in the local communities where its aftermath is most urgently processed, because it is there where the strained social relations are most intimate.[469] That is why there persists a kind of asymmetry between the local and (nation-) state mnemotechniques, which we should always be aware of and be prepared to identify.[470] Nationalistic rhetoric and state sanctioned narratives have a tendency to hide such asymmetries [see articles IV and V]. And the extent to which "collective" or "cultural memory" discourses often tend to blur the social units with an apparently unified nation, and even more so when there is a comparative effort built into the exercise [as in article III], it is paramount that we keep the different communities and their mnemohistories conceptually distinct.

In Ireland, republican nationalists placed the blame for the famine on the British government, and in Finland social democratic intellectuals scorned the domestic government for its "bourgeoise", "liberal", and "capitalist" policies in the 1860s. The Finnish nationalist movement sought to whitewash the political actions taken by the Finnish autonomous government during the famine, while in Kainuu people began to embrace the notion of *Hungerland* (Nälkämaa) as their regional identity after the famine.[471] In addition, because the famine left a number orphans in its trail, it constituted a break or a starting point for many family histories. These are all imagined identities that form communities, but not all of them are 'national', although they manifest a similar mnemohistorical dynamic.

A key issue to recognize is that every kind of community - be it ancestral, professional, ideological, regional, national or local - that encompasses more members than regular interpersonal face-to-face contacts allows for are imagined communities.[472] The point is that communities and/or identities are

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[468] In addition, one could reasonably question whether nationality ever has been universally accepted.

[469] For an example of this, see Mac Suibhne 2017.

[470] By this I do not mean that the local and the national are always asymmetrically diverged in their mnemohistorical emphasis regarding famines, but that there can be differences that scholars should be careful not to overlook. This requires a specific willingness and focus to spot them, because in general national and intimately affective processes of nationalization effectively utilized and infused the nation into the local social world. See Confino 1997; Alapuro 1994; Stauter-Halsted 2001.

[471] Kainuu province's official regional anthem is *Nälkämaan laulu*, based on poem by Ilmari Kianto and composed by Oskari Merikanto. See also Toivonen 2018.

[472] Yack 2012.

social constructs, and individuals act and react to them on the basis of how they are imagined, and they thus have a real physical impact on lives and social relations. National identity, as much as any other identity, is a cognitive construct upheld by private feelings and memory, but communicated, negotiated, and disseminated through symbols, exempla, and metaphors,[473] which in due time become (national) history. This is why we need a category of analysis that can integrate the both latent and manifest levels of (personal) memory with the social narratives disguised as (national/local/class) history under one gaze. In other words, we need mnemohistory.

The world becomes socially structured and reconstructed according to how people imagine themselves and their place in it. Consequently, it is vital to recognize the inherent bias that is present in every speech act that engages with the project of reconstructing a community through the representation of the past, including speech acts of collective trauma.

4.5 METHODOLOGICAL NATIONALISM AND COMPARATIVE HISTORIOGRAPHY

The period that this thesis has set out to investigate is a period of nation building and preservation. Thus, it was an era that we nowadays would characterize as a period of intense methodological nationalism. At the beginning of this period, in the 1840s, neither Ireland nor Finland were independent nation-states; they were not even proper states, but parts of empires. Only a small number of the upper classes held out some hope for some kind of national statehood, somewhere in the distant future. Over the next hundred years these societies and the proto-states transformed radically, and so did the public consumption, representation, and anticipation of its own history. As I have discussed earlier (in the Introduction, and in articles II, III, and V), professional historians, popular and polemical historians, and social scientists were important agents in popularizing these histories and legitimizing the very idea of an explicit nation-state.[474] This took place with a changing intensity, both prior to and especially after gaining independence. The changing historical context of where and when a national narrative is propagated, with or without a famine story as a part of it, needs to be included in any assessment of mnemohistory.

By methodological nationalism we mean the study and representation of any topic with a national framework as its interpretative frame. In the words of Ulrich Beck, "it equates society with the nation-states societies, and sees states and their governments as the cornerstones of a social sciences

[473] Hogan 2009; Lakoff and Johnson 2003.

[474] For other examples see Berger and Lorenz 2010; also Jordanova 1998, 192-211.

analysis."[475] In a way it is 'banal nationalism' performed by the academia.[476] On the one hand, this takes place when scholars utilize the data that has been provided and archived by nation-states. The choice of sources then infiltrates the interpretation derived from this process. On the other hand, methodological nationalism takes shape in how scholars structure information according to their assumed audience, which often happens to be somehow confined within the populace of a nation-state, especially since the early twentieth century. Examples are numerous: the history of any country, a local history that conforms to the master narrative of its national history, a handbook of any country's fauna or geography, and so on. Comparative studies do not in themselves provide an escape route from methodological nationalism. On the contrary, by comparing a number of nationally defined units they become explicit forms of methodological nationalism in action.[477] Transnational studies, on the other hand, such as the study of migrations or the transfer of ideas, are not necessarily examples of methodological nationalism, if their focus is on something that transcends nation-states.

Methodological nationalism is so common in the social sciences that perhaps it is a bit overoptimistic to hope to banish it altogether. The sources, the purpose, and the audience of a study, in addition to the scholar's own background, most often make it an inseparable component of any research. The best we can do is to recognize its presence in our own research, assess in what ways it may influence and intrude in our findings, and form our conclusions in the light of this assessment. Importantly, methodological nationalism does not equate to bad scholarship. Many good and useful surveys are abundantly clear on their research questions, methods, and limitations, even if they still fall under the definition of methodological nationalism. To me the term is not normative. However, one must be aware of it, and assess how it intrudes in and shapes one's scholarship.

This thesis includes perspectives that are comparative, national, and transnational. This thesis also incorporates a certain amount of methodological nationalism. In addition, it is also a critical study of methodological nationalism in previous national scholarship. Comparative historiography can make methodological nationalism visible, and raise to our awareness of a new set of problems and questions.[478] Comparative historiography is in this way a craft that empowers the reader to deconstruct not only methodological nationalism, but any kind of narrow-sightedness or methodological blindness in previous works and narratives. It does not, however, liberate a scholar from methodological nationalism, even if the scholar has set out to investigate how methodological nationalism operates in

[475] Beck 2007, 287. See also Chernilo 2011; Lorenz 1999; Kocka and Haupt 2009.

[476] Billig 1995, 49-51.

[477] See for example Marjanen 2009, 239-263.

[478] Lorenz 1999.

various nation-states. However, it does make one more conscious of one's own internal bias, and the bias determined by the sources that are used.

I have chosen two nation-states and compared them with each other, but what is crucial is that I do not regard either of the units (the mnemohistories and their narratives) as representable of the whole, but rather as groups of intersecting and contentious units (or even individuals), some of which even transcend the boundaries of the nation-state. In this sense, mnemohistory, nationalism, and famines are transnational processes and their study reaches (or attempts to reach) beyond the confines of methodological nationalism.[479] In the study of both mnemohistory and nationalism one is constantly confronted with voices and texts that explicitly or implicitly claim to speak for their community. However, if one digs a bit deeper, then the uniformity of that community most often becomes contested. In other words, we must not accept narratives *a priori*, but search for contesting voices, and deconstruct and problematize all forms of hegemonic representation. Scholars of nationalism would probably see this approach as a recognition of the contested nature that so often goes alongside nationalism and nation-building. Nation-building has always included a hegemonic struggle between different groups that want to impose their version of national identity upon others. For some it may include remembering the famine, and for others it may mean forgetting it. Both approaches have legitimate reasons for taking these paths, but neither one has the right to impose their narrative and their identity upon others. As a historian of mnemohistory and nationalism, the spectre of dissenting voices must be appreciated, recognized, and historicised.

If, as noted above, nation and patria are old concepts, then nationalism and patriotism are new concepts, or more precisely late nineteenth century concepts that refer to the political mobilization of the populace around the idea of having a state for the nation, i.e. a nation-state [see also article V]. As with many other -isms, nationalism is an ideological movement. However, ideological movements that gain mass support require a political arena and extensive opportunities for political participation (this includes the general level of industrialization, print capitalism, the revolution in transport and communication, the growth in school attendance,[480] and so forth), which is why the timing of the advent of nationalism should not be overlooked. In nineteenth century Finland, nationalism underpinned every political party organization, but in Ireland nationalism formed a party of its own that competed in elections against liberals and conservatives (i.e. persons that may have originated from Ireland but did not necessarily identify themselves with the Irish cause). In other words, the timing and spatial context differed. Furthermore, an individual 'nationalist' does not automatically exemplify 'nationalism' as a political mass movement. Nationalism refers to that stage

[479] Note the difference between De Cesaris and Rigney's project on transnational memory. De Cesari and Rigney 2014, 1-25.

[480] Hroch 1985, 29.

when it becomes a mass movement, but it does not require that the whole population share that ideology's convictions, or that those who do so would think of them in similar ways.[481] Furthermore, the difference between nationalism and patriotism is a matter of perspective. It is typical to see one's own love for the fatherland, patriotism, represented as a positive and virtuous form of altruism, while nationalism is often seen as an extreme form of patriotism that has gone too far.[482] In national discourses, one's own acts are often classified as patriotic and others as war-mongering, as a form of nationalism. Intellectually and analytically, it is difficult to draw a reasonable distinction between these two concepts, because often one person's patriotism is another's nationalism.

Scholars of nationalism sometime make a distinction between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism. Whether this distinction can be useful analytically in terms of understanding nationalism is not my concern here.[483] The main reason we must be aware of this conceptual distinction is that it has often been central for nationalists and builders of nation-states. It has served as a framework for governments and nationalists to define their own population in legal terms, e.g. according to descent and thus more akin to inherited biology, or as a voluntary action distinguishable through a certain commitment to a set of liberal values. In practice, today most countries' legal systems adopt some kind of mixture of these two categories, with an emphasis towards one or the other end of the scale. Historically, however, every country has had at different times a different emphasis in this scale of national identification. In this study it is valuable to recognize that nationalistic discourse, in both Ireland and Finland, comes in a variety of shades, forms, and emphases. It is often very heterogenous, and if there ever seems to be a consensus reached on what national identity is and what it is dependent upon, this is often a very ambiguous consensus. The historical discourses move back and forth between cultural and biological arguments.[484] For the self-acclaimed nationalists, it is often much easier to point out what national identity is *not* than to define what it is or should be.

4.5.1 SOME EXAMPLES OF COLLECTIVE NARRATIVES FRAMING FAMINE INTERPRETATIONS

The representation of history and famine is never isolated from a society's general identity discourses at a specific time. Famine is always represented with the gaze upon a character, factual or fictional, but nevertheless through a recognizable identity category. National history, especially the more it is

[481] Hroch 1985, 23; McMahon 2008, 6.

[482] Yack 2012; Hogan 2009; Kettunen 2018.

[483] This division has also been criticized as superficial and misleading see Gat 2013, 260-312; Yack 2012, 23-43.

[484] For example, an example on Finland see Tervonen 2014, 137-162.

didactically oriented (as in primary education), is narrated, taught, and studied through historical characters that its students find interesting and identifiable [see articles IV and V]. Thus, for the creation of a historical consciousness around famine, it matters in what way the famine period is revisited in the portrayal of national "heroes". The fact that in Ireland the names Daniel O'Connell, Sir Robert Peel, and Queen Victoria are forever associated with the Irish Famine, and the fact that in Finland history textbooks only make cursory remarks on the famine in the portrayal of Johan Vilhelm Snellman, irrespective that it was the greatest challenge of his political career, are not inconsequential framings, but create patterns of associations between events and personas.

In countries that have experienced major famines, such as Finland and Ireland, even today one can occasionally encounter a distinct local famine narrative, either in local histories or local folklore sources, that sets itself apart from general local narratives in that it recognizes the famine as something that did not really concern 'us', however defined. In Ireland, Cormac Ó Gráda has noted that folklore narratives tend to recall that one's own locality was spared the worst of the Famine, a little more often than other evidence might suggest was true.[485] Concerning Ulster, Christine Kinealy and Gerard Mac Atasney have written that in contrast to contemporary evidence "the traditional orthodoxy has been that the Famine had little impact on the northeastern corner of Ireland, especially on the Protestant population".[486] This 'orthodoxy' can be a reflection of simple ignorance. However, stemming from ignorance or not, it does not absolve it from its association with another mnemotechnical function, namely identity politics with the purpose of indulging a supposedly superior Protestant work ethic. It performs the function of strengthening identity categories in the present by historically associating progress, prosperity, and wealth with the Unionist and Protestant communities, while the Famine, i.e. starvation and poverty, becomes associated with a crisis confined to the Roman-Catholic and Gaelic communities. In the highly charged context of Northern Ireland, making such ethnic distinctions with regards to historical narratives is politically contentious.

Novelists have also sometimes provided counter-narratives to national master narratives. In Finland, the fictional character of Saarijärven Paavo is a central figure. He is the stereotype of hardworking, God-fearing and altruistic, Finnish-speaking peasant masculinity. These famine narratives, which in one way or another can historically embody virtues in the actual famine event, make the famine narrative more tolerable and acceptable. The case of Karl A. Tavaststjerna and his omission of the 'the spirit of Saarijärven Paavo'[487] in his novel *Hårda tider* (1891) has been referenced in article II. However, although Runeberg wrote the poem in Swedish, the character has rarely been used to

[485] Ó Gráda 1999, 203-206, 205.

[486] Kinealy and Mac Atasney 2000, 1.

[487] Meurman 1892, 4.

portray the self-image of the Swedish-speaking communities. It is was originally a portrayal of the Finnish-speaking people, written in Swedish for a Swedish-reading public, that only later became cherished as the self-image of both the Finnish- and Swedish-speaking groups. The Swedish speaking communities in Finland, on the other hand, do not possess a comparative literary stereotype of their own, but rather have appropriated or taken their own cultural share of Saarijärven Paavo. However, for the argument here, the case of Oscar Behm and his plot structure is more important.

In 1922 a Swedish speaking novelist, Oscar Behm, published a book on periods of crisis and break-ups in a fictional Swedish-speaking village in Southern Finland [Uusimaa], which carries some ethno-symbolically charged oratory similar to that used in Northern Ireland, although the context is different.[488] His book is an obscure rarity in Finnish-Swedish fiction literature, and not very well known nowadays. It is also rare because it describes famine in a Swedish-speaking community from a rural perspective. Traditionally, Finnish-Swedish literature and historiography has often alluded to the famine as a matter that concerned the Finnish-speaking communities in the interior more than the Swedish communities that mainly occupied the coastal regions (and thus ignoring a number of Swedish-speaking communities in coastal Osthrobothnia with high mortality levels in 1867-68).[489] Therefore, the absence of a Saarijärven Paavo type of character is expected. However, although Behm did represent the famine, he did so in a manner that racialized its intrusion into the Swedish-speaking community in the province of Nyland (i.e. Uusimaa in Finnish); not through Saarijärven Paavo and the Finns as one would initially suspect, but through a third ethnic category: a Romani traveller couple ['tattare'] infested with an undefined famine disease that then erupted in the village, causing mass mortality.[490] Now, this was pure fiction, and in a not-so-widely read novel and thus exceptional, but it highlights the relationship between explaining the famine and the use of identity categories in othering minorities.

Such an ethnicization of famine's intrusion into a local community is extremely rare in the Finnish literature, but if it ever occurred then early 1920s Finland would have been the appropriate zeitgeist for it. Within the newly established nation-state, the majority Finnish and the minority Swedish-speaking Finns were to form the key ethnic component of the Finnish state, and therefore only they could be represented as innocent or legitimate sufferers of the famine (or any other disaster in history), while the cause of the famine could be racialized and ascribed to an outsider, or groups that were not part of the Finnish nation. In the history of the Finnish Roma population and

[488] On ethnosymbolic nationalism see Smith 2009.

[489] Even Tavaststjerna, writing in Swedish, situated his famine novel plot in Finnish-speaking Häme. On the other hand, the early twentieth century collected folklore from the Swedish-speaking regions does suggest that the famine had some kind of place in local mnemohistorical consciousness. Wessman 1924.

[490] Behm 1922, 5-32.

its encounters with the Finnish peasant majority, the type of incident depicted by Behm carries a longer continuity,[491] but within the famine literature in Finland its ethnic finger-pointing is an exception of its kind. Furthermore, when famine (or its perpetrator) is culturally associated with a specific identity category, it does signify a conscious attempt to avoid difficult questions or provide external causes for the famine. Perhaps this was unavoidable for a Swedish-speaking rural identity, considering the lack of its own (sub)national character such as Saarijärven Paavo, who could emulate their famine struggle. Likewise, if Britain is generally associated with oppression, it would make it much easier to view the Irish famine as a continuance of that oppression. In the same way, if some Finnish localities perceived that the famine did not concern them, but only their neighbours, then they will have had only limited interested in researching whether that truly was the case, and consequently their own sense of an immutable identity is not threatened, and a particular chapter of history can be buried. In addition, if Finnish-speaking communities have an established image, role-model, and personalized image of proper conduct during hard times, no matter how fictional it is, this creates the foundation for a repeated renegotiation of whether that myth is true or not.

4.5.2 CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING

Methodological nationalism focuses the contextual frame on national characteristics. Comparative historiography forces us to acknowledge that in different countries scholars classify their own country's 'nationalistic' development in distinctive ways that are not easily applicable to other countries [e.g. article III]. Miroslav Hroch's classic model of the social formation of national movements in Europe through different phases is appropriate for a general overview, but not useful for the analysis of conceptual differences between countries, nor an analysis of detailed nuances within countries. For instance, in Ireland scholars often distinguish between Catholic nationalism, Gaelic nationalism, cultural nationalism, revolutionary nationalism, advanced nationalism, and so on, but these are terms that suite Irish development specifically and are not easily extrapolated or understood in the context of other countries.[492] In Finland, scholars talk of romantic nationalism and the Fennoman national movement, and sometimes tries to make a distinction between patriotism and nationalism.[493]

The key concepts of each politico-linguistic context often have their own distinctive meanings. They may have different connotations and normative associations that affect how they are used, and for what purpose. In Finland, the word nationalism is often used to distinguish extreme national behaviour

[491] Tervonen 2010.

[492] Mac Laughlin 2001; Hutchinson 1996; Foster 2001; Garner 2004; Dwan 2016; Kelly, [Matthew] 2016.

[493] E.g. Mylly 2002.

(such as fascism, Nazism, or other xenophobic activity) from patriotism, or it is associated with Finnish linguistic nationalism (e.g. the Fennoman movement).[494] Although *the* people (kansa) in popular parlance can sometimes be described as patriotic (isänmaallinen) or nationally-minded (kansallismielinen), the people (kansa) is very rarely referred to as nationalistic, which seems to have a strongly negative tone attached to it. Nationalism in Finland is generally understood as bloody-headed, irrational, uncivilized, and tribal-like behaviour. The Finnish case is a perfect example of what Michael Billig refers to as "Our Patriotism – Their Nationalism".[495]

Historians studying Finland often point out that the major political party divisions from the 1860s to the 1900s were not between Swedish-speakers and Finnish speakers as such (shortened to Swedes and Finns), but rather that the emphasis was on differences between the Swedish-*minded* and Finnish-*minded*,[496] as the majority of the populace had a Swedish-speaking background regardless. No matter their native language, or their affinity for a particular language, these politicians have seldom been publicly described as 'nationalists' - or at least it is always regarded as slightly contentious or historically vulgar - although they are often renowned for their 'patriotism'.[497] In an international comparison and analysis of national movements and nation-building, these distinctions (such as the difference between patriotism and nationalism) are hard to justify, and yet they are vital identity signifiers in their own more limited context, and influence how famines are understood in 'our' history.

In stark contrast, Irish scholars have never shied away from calling certain historical actors, associations, or movements 'nationalist' or 'nationalistic', but quite often take it as self-evident that a certain part of society is precisely that, and that it is not necessarily a bad or normative characterization, but an accurate one. The Irish Parliamentary Party aimed to gather all Irish representatives in Westminster in support of a unified Irish stance against Conservatives and Liberals. The leaders of the Easter Rising in 1916 held to a mixture of ideologies (revolutionary and cultural nationalists, different churches, socialists, suffragettes, conservatives, liberals, anarchists, home rulers, Fenians), but for a moment they were all labelled as nationalists. The *Sinn Feiners*, which went on to win the election in a landslide victory in 1918,

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[494] E.g. Alapuro 1999, 99.

[495] Billig 1995, 55.

[496] Olkkonen 2003, 519-520; Tuominen 1956, 61-63; Engman 2016a, 41; Jutikkala and Pirinen 1996, 308-349.

[497] Furthermore, the Fennoman movement and its demand for one language and one nation did involve elements that in a broader survey of nationalism certainly would be identified as pointing towards ethnic nationalism. Certain elements within the minority Swedish-minded political group Svecoman's would also probably qualify as ethnic nationalism. However, for political expediency and historical outcomes, we have not learned to speak about the population of Finland as containing two separate nations, but as one nation with two languages.

were undoubtedly perceived as nationalist.[498] And the Irish Civil War was fought between two competing strands within the nationalist fraction.[499] However, concerning questions of linguistic nationalism, being a native speaker of Gaelic is rarely interpreted as a sign of being a nationalist, although an affinity towards the Gaelic language has been seen as of signature of cultural nationalism. This is distinct from the Finnish case, where a similar affinity would be classified as leaning more towards ethnic nationalism, if it were to be interpreted as nationalism at all.[500]

The development of nationalism in Ireland and Finland follows many similarities, but in the more precise and especially conceptual details they diverge. If we are to understand how famine operates in mnemohistory, these cultural distinctions (here I refer to culture in a very broad sense) cannot be overlooked. Having said that, we need to additionally remind ourselves that the search for a nation's (or any community's) particularities in mnemohistory is not an aim in itself, but a tool to advance our knowledge of mnemohistorical dynamics as a transnational phenomenon. After all, mnemohistory does not operate in isolation from its cultural and political environment. On the contrary, it is embedded within them. Conceptual, associational, and metaphorical nuances do matter, and comparative historiography makes them visible.

[498] Travers 2018, 329.

[499] This is the mainstream political interpretation of the Irish Civil War, e.g. Kissane 2018, 653. Recently, Gavin Foster has brought into focus a renewed interest in the study of the class aspects of the conflict. Foster 2015, 7-17.

[500] Alapuro 1999, 99; Tervonen 2014, 147-148.

5 THE IRISH FAMINE IN IRISH MNEMOHISTORY

How can we narrate the mnemohistory of the Irish Famine?

5.1 THE CONTEXT

The Famine did not start from a vacuum, year zero, at the onset of the triggering potato blight. It was preceded by structures, beliefs, experiences, expectations, coping mechanisms, and strategies learned and tested prior to the event. One of the major interpretational prerequisites was the geopolitical configuration of Ireland, which since the Act of Union in 1801 was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. This had an impact on several issues that later became symptomatic and symbolic of how the Famine was interpreted prior, during, and after the Famine.

Prior to the union, Ireland had a Parliament that convened in Dublin. This parliament, often dubbed Grattan's Parliament after its prolific leader of the 1780s and the 1790s, was the privileged domain of the Protestant landowning upper class. The majority Roman-Catholics were excluded from representation, in accordance to the general restrictions placed on them in the Penal Laws from the seventeenth century. The union transformed Irish democracy from an oligarchical system by transplanting 100 Irish MEPs to Westminster, and replacing the borough-based representation with county-based representation, thus according to Alvin Jackson enhancing Ireland's democratic representation.[501] Catholic emancipation, i.e. removing representational restrictions on Catholics taking a seat in Parliament, had to wait until The Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829, which as a side-effect disenfranchised a substantial share of previous voters by raising the property requirements from a forty shilling freehold to a minimum of ten pounds worth of property.[502] However, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century nationalist imagination, Grattan's Parliament was to become an important symbol of a homegrown and idyllic form of historic Irish parliamentary life and sovereignty.

The political constellation wherein Ireland formed an integral part of the United Kingdom was the context and structure of every social, economic, or political reform project. The Union facilitated an expectation that Ireland would economically benefit from its integrated position. The real progress, however, was less evident and harder to notice for contemporary observers. The fact that Catholic emancipation was delayed by nearly 30 years is a case in

[501] Jackson 2010, 26–27.

[502] Foster 1992[1989], 158.

point. Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847), a Roman Catholic lawyer from County Kerry, rose to political prominence as the leader of the Catholic emancipation movement and founder of the Catholic Association in the 1820s.

The economic development of pre-Famine Ireland has attracted much scholarly attention. Notably, the population grew quickly, from circa 2.2 million around 1750[503] to circa 8.6 million in 1846,[504] with much thanks to the widespread adoption of the potato as a healthy - and in the Irish climate easily cultivatable – new food source. The potato's main benefit was that it provided more calories per acre than any other crop, and could be harvested in regions and soils where other crops did not flourish.[505] Thus, it provided opportunities to start families (and start them earlier) with smaller holdings to support them. On the downside was the monoculture that its appropriation gave rise to and the inequality in wealth that it supported, which made a large proportion of the population, and the economy as whole, vulnerable to a shock if this single crop failed, as happened in the late 1840s.[506]

Ownership of land was highly unequal, and a denominational rift was visible in the social hierarchy. This was partially due to the legacy of the Penal Code era, that had restricted Catholics from owning property. At the top of the hierarchy was the Big House, that manifested a conspicuous concentration of wealth, represented an Anglo-Saxon linguistic ethnicity, and was a symbol of Protestant wealth in a primarily poor Catholic countryside.[507] Big Houses were the target of nationalist and Catholic agitation, because for the former they represented an alien, oppressive, and often absentee landlord class, while for the latter they represented a taxation burden, as the Catholic majority was legally obliged to support the Anglican Church until the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1871.

Ireland was a highly rural country in the mid-nineteenth century, especially in comparison to the rapid increase of urbanization in Great Britain. Ninety per cent of the Irish population lived in the countryside.[508] In the 1840s, O'Connell began to lead the Repeal Association with aim of repealing the Act of Union. This later coalesced into a national movement, with the famous monster meetings, which included a broad range of ideologically minded nationalists, some more revolutionary than others. Daniel O'Connell, on the other hand, was a devoted critic of violent means in political campaigns, which infuriated the hardliners who formed the Young Ireland movement, founded the Nation, and led the rebellion of 1848. Its leaders were Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy, John Mitchel, and William Smith O´Brien.

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[503] Fitzgerald 2017, 9.

[504] Ó Gráda 2012, 171.

[505] Adelman 2017, 234; Feehan 2012, 29-37; Ó Gráda 1999, 13-24.

[506] Mokyr 1983, 262.

[507] Dooley 2017, 161-176.

[508] Solar 2017, 26.

5.2 THE POSITION OF HISTORY IN IRELAND

The history of academia is a crucial background factor when considering the essence and role of history in Ireland and Finland. Both countries received their first university in the Early Modern Period; the University of Dublin (Trinity College Dublin) founded in 1592 on the model of the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge,[509] and the *Kungliga akademin i Åbo* (The Royal Academy of Åbo/Turku) was founded in 1640.[510] Both were established by an oversea colonial power-centre in an effort to consolidate and enforce the loyalty of its subject across the whole empire.[511]

This is where the similarities end. The symbolic role of the universities in their surroundings diverged heavily. In Ireland, for the next two hundred years the University of Dublin, also known as Trinity College Dublin or TCD, became the symbol of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant class and its domination over the majority Catholic population. In practice, TCD remained for a long time an exclusive privilege of the Protestant elite, a sentiment that was intensified by Catholics' general resentful stance towards it even after Catholics and other dissenters were allowed to apply in 1793.[512] While Roman Catholicism was penalized for a greater part of the 17th and 18th centuries in Ireland and elsewhere in Britain, the Catholic clergy had to be educated on the continent, mainly in France. At the end of eighteenth century a gradual loosening of the Penal Laws commenced: in 1782 Catholics could open Catholic schools within certain limitations, in 1793 Catholics were allowed to apply to and hold chairs at TCD, and in 1795 a Catholic College was founded at Maynooth, primarily focusing on the education of the Catholic clergy in Ireland.

This development had an international context as well. The French revolution caused problems for colleges operating on the Continent, and for the Irish clergy students that were supposed to attend them. The war between France and the UK in 1793 increased the willingness of Parliament in London to appease domestic Catholic (mainly Irish) sentiments in exchange for more loyalty to the Crown and influence over Catholic education in Ireland.[513]

In the mid-nineteenth century, in a now religiously more tolerant society, the state (now the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland) founded several universities that were meant to better accommodate Catholic concerns about proselytism through education: the nondenominational Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Cork, and Galway (1845). The creation of the Queen's non-denominational colleges was a logical follow up to the creation and success of the non-denominational elementary schools, the National Schools, in Ireland

[509] Coolahan 1981, 107.

[510] In 1828, the university was relocated to Helsinki and renamed the Imperial Alexander University. In 1919 it was renamed the University of Helsinki.

[511] McDowell and Webb 1982, 1-3; Klinge 2010, 61-72.

[512] MacCaffrey 1912, 103; Coolahan 1981, 111-114.

[513] Corish 1995, 1-25.

from 1831 onwards.[514] The purpose of these new colleges was to cater to the higher educational needs of the Catholic laity, which hitherto had been neglected. However, the Catholic clergy in Ireland remained opposed and unsupportive of these institutions, precisely because of their non-denominational character, which was considered a Protestant plot to undermine the Catholic religion in Ireland. Consequently, the Irish Catholic hierarchy decided, upon the recommendation of Rome, to set up its own university in 1854, The Catholic University of Ireland (which later developed to become University College Dublin), as a rival to the non-denominational universities.[515]

Consequently, by the end of nineteenth century Ireland had several universities with denominationally, and hence also politically, differentiated characteristics: Protestant, mixed, and Catholic. Whereas Finland only had one, the Imperial Alexander University in Helsinki, an overwhelmingly Lutheran institution whose main purpose was to educate state-loyal administrators to better meet the needs of the emerging nation-state[516]. At the onset of the Famine, history as an academic discipline exploring narratives of the past, and indeed education by and large, were heavily contested from a religious point of view in Ireland, whereas in Finland the essence and purpose of history were quarrelled over mainly by Lutherans themselves, within the same administrative structures. In Ireland the quarrels took place outside of academia.

This institutional context influenced how history as an academic discipline would be regarded in Ireland differently from the trajectory it took in Finland. In nineteenth century Ireland, historical scholarship within academia was confined to a few isolated departments and individual eccentrics at their home universities, often titled antiquarians,[517] whose scholarly interest mainly focused on local archaeology and history and on events preceding the Union, especially Gaelic and Medieval history, and with little or no academic coordination of an island-wide academic platform.[518]

Ciaran Brady has identified two historical schools that emerged after the Famine. One is the 'classic nationalist' strand, with the most important contributor being John Mitchel (1815-1875).[519] This school promoted the claim that the central thread of Irish history is one of ruthless exploitation by Britain, and the Famine was the most recent example of that trajectory, hence the curious title of Mitchel's Famine history *The Last Conquest of Ireland*

[514] Coolahan 1981, 113.

[515] Coolahan 1981, 118-120.

[516] Klinge 2004, 52-53.

[517] See Guy Beiner and Joep Leerssen's fascinating debate on the virtual history of Irish historiography. Beiner and Leerssen 2007, 67-81.

[518] Brady 2011, 283-286.

[519] Brady 2011, 290.

(Perhaps).[520] Many other popular and ideologically committed authors, e.g. M.A. Sullivan, recirculated what Roy Foster has classified as a genre of its own: *the story of Ireland*.[521] What is notable about this nationalist school, however, is that it did not originate in academia, but from polemical journalists and politicians that were self-appointed representatives of the people. In this sense they had a loose resemblance to the Fennoman politicians in Finland, although these were also integrated into Finnish academia [see article I and II].

Academia was mainly represented by the defensive works of Anglo-Irish historians, most of whom were Protestant and educated either in England or at TCD. The works of William E. H. Lecky (1838-1903), Richard Bagwell (1840-1918), and Goddard Henry Orpen (1852-1908) emerged largely as a reaction to the indignation caused by an English historian, J. A. Froude, with his *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, published in three volumes in 1872-1874. Froude's work asserted that the native Irish were a barbarous people in need of a civilized and moral guardianship. However, he then argued that England had historically failed to meet its moral obligation on every practical level, which was a critique against the Protestant Ascendancy. His work provided ideological ammunition for nationalist politicians, which further inspired the Protestant intellectual establishment (Lecky, Bagwell, and Orpen) to refute the claims put forward by Froude. Stylistically, the Irish academic historians were more confined to a strictly linear narrative of events that did not leave any room for interpretation, analysis, or assessment of some social groups' culpability in historical miseries.[522] If they ventured into more contemporary history, as William E. H. Lecky (1838-1903) did, then they were automatically seen as representatives of partisan history, as indeed Lecky was; being educated at Trinity College Dublin, a Protestant, and writing mostly on the history of England, he thus had less significance for and sympathy from Catholic Ireland. In addition, these historians of high politics had practically no interest, or even the linguistic ability, to explore Ireland's Gaelic past and its sources. The Celticist scholars remained distant to them.[523]

Thus, there was no shared consensus, debate, or even a platform among academics to contemplate what history is, for what purpose it should be studied, and what kind of identity it should project. The first history departments were founded in the early 1920s.[524] The academic tradition radiating from England, which e.g. the abovementioned Lecky emulated, seems to have preferred history as a resource for statesmanship, with an emphasis on high politics. In other words, this was a mindset in which history was not considered suitable for the public and popular imagination [see article

[520] Mitchel 1861.

[521] Foster 2001.

[522] Brady 2011, 292-295.

[523] Brady 2011, 296.

[524] Brady 2011, 288.

V].[525] Ironically, this did not hinder history from developing precisely into that: an academically unchecked tool used for and in political and ideological persuasion in the popular press, by public figures.

It was not until the launch of the journal *Irish Historical Studies* in 1938 that we can identify a concentrated and coordinated effort to professionalize Irish historiography, by introducing new scholarly standards and methods from abroad and establishing an all-Ireland platform for scholarly debate.[526] However, this professional development, which emphasized critical source interrogation, archival work, and a detachment from nationalism or any other grand narrative, became seen as an elitist project, to some extent as inaccessible to the public and, especially, the popular perception of regarding history as an emotionally engaging story of Ireland.[527] Indeed, the foundation of a new journal and the new scientific ethos that it prescribed in turn gave rise to a new perception of historians as "revisionists". Academic historians became popularly branded as new or revisionist historians, distinct from popular historians, or nationalist historians, that told better stories more in tune with the public's feelings and memories of the past.

This debate continues up to this day, which for a non-Irish historian can seem a bit obscure and difficult to follow, mainly because the labels used makes little sense to scholars unacquainted with the Irish context: "new historians", "revisionist historians", "post-revisionists", "historians" (obfuscating popular and non-academic historians with each other), "non-historians", and "historians from outside Ireland". In public parlance, revisionist historian has become a derogatory term, as if an attempt to rewrite history would equate to falsifying it. However, as noted by Boyce and O'Day, conceptually and intellectually anti-revisionist critics often miss the academic target they aim to correct.[528] "Revisionist historians" are often accused of presenting value-free representations of the past. On the other hand, in famine historiographies some academic famine historians, such as Cecile Woodham-Smith, Christine Kinealy, and James Sr. Donnelly, are sometimes characterized as post-revisionists because they have had an interest in, or the audacity to, study questions of government culpability, a topic which they claim has been neglected by Irish historians until the 150th anniversary.[529] In essence, the nationalist or popular historians find it hard to accept that the scientific historical craft is by definition an exercise in refining, revising, and complementing older interpretations.[530] Stephen Howe has denounced the whole revisionist vs. anti-revisionist dispute as an 'irrelevance', because 'almost all serious practicing historians are in the former camp', yet they are

[525] Bourke 2016, 272.

[526] Boyce and O'Day 1996.

[527] Daly 1996, 86; Ó Gráda 1987; Bradshaw 1989; Bexar 2016, 155-163, 281-282.

[528] Boyce and O'Day 1996, 10-11.

[529] Kinealy 2002, 2-3. See also Daly 1997; Daly 2007; Bexar 2016, 309-354.

[530] Boyce and O´Day 1996, 1-14. As examples of this debate see Bradshaw 1989; Ellis 1991.

too different to be cast in the same mould.[531] He identifies, and I must agree with him, the issue as something that cannot be solved purely on academic terms, because it is a matter concerning the political and cultural identification with Ireland's colonial or postcolonial legacy among a much broader public than academic historians.

It is here that Rüsen's term historical culture becomes helpful. History, historiography, and historical scholarship operate on a multitude of levels that are entwined with each other to varying degrees. The different academic disciplines – similarly to the political, popular, and commercial agents - have different perspectives through which they interrogate, analyse, and represent the past. The meanings attached to concepts like nation, history, religion, colonialism, memory, and identity are fluid, and cannot be properly understood unless the speaker as well as the receiver's perspectives are taken into consideration, i.e. the entire discursive context.

The centre stage of mid-Victorian Irish intellectual debate and discourse was not given to history, as was the case in Finland, but to political economy. The foundation had been laid by the late eighteenth-century political economists Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and Thomas Malthus. The intellectuals of nineteenth century Ireland and Britain had a high confidence in political economy, and in its supposedly impartial, scientific, secular, and non-ideological nature, which was increasingly important in the religiously fragmented British society, and in particular Ireland.[532] Richard Whately, the Anglican archbishop of Dublin from 1831, regarded political economy as the primary and lasting cure to Irish social and moral ills, to such an extent that its gospel was disseminated through *Money Matter* –lessons in the National Boards textbooks to every child enrolled in a National school [see article V]. In his honour, as the founding father of a distinctively Irish (or Dublin) political economic school of thinking, several Whately chairs of political economy were established in Irish universities. In contrast to history or religion, it was believed that more and better understanding of political economy would deliver stronger social cohesion, social control, and more prosperity across all social classes. The political economic debates of mid-nineteenth century Ireland confirmed a utilitarian and providentialist reading of history.[533] It was through this prism that the Famine - its meaning, benefits, and catalyst for progress or decline - was debated with contemporary political and economic events always underpinning the lessons learned from it, as during the harvest failures of the late 1870s and the emergency relief that followed to 1884.[534]

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[531] Howe 2000, 90. In Finland, Heikki Ylikangas has also raised concerns about the "one school thought" encouraged by the tendency of historians to be biased towards the contemporary political elites. According to Ylikangas, Finnish historians shy away from nationally sensitive topics. Ylikangas 2015. Ylikangas himself is noted for being a prolific and provocative historian since the 1960s.

[532] Boylan and Foley 1992, 2.

[533] Gray 2004a, 166.

[534] See in particular Crossman 2004, 167-181; also Gray 2004a, 151-166.

In questions of property, land, and labour relations, and government responsibility in safeguarding people from starvation, the mnemohistory of the Famine remained ever relevant in political discourse. In some sense the political economy discourses could be interpreted as the intellectual predecessor to an academic historical debate, with the added distinction that political economists may have had a greater influence on government policies in the nineteenth century than Irish historians ever have had over policy matters, including in the post-1921 era. From the 1840s to the turn of the century, but in particularly during the first three decades after it, the Famine was a topic belonging to 'political-economic memory',[535] and therefore it is not surprising that its key debates were argued within an academic framework closer to political sciences and popular politics than as a matter of history.

5.3 POINTS IN FAMINE HISTORIOGRAPHY: STATE-LOYALISM, NATIONALISM, AND DIVINE DETERMINISM

Irish famine historiography existed long before history-writing became recognized as an academic profession with a scientific ethos attached to it. The claim that Irish historians have shied away from, neglected, or otherwise silenced themselves on the subject should be assessed against the more crucial question of who is accepted as a historian, or who has the authority of historical interpretation. [536] The famine historians of the nineteenth century were first and foremost politicians, state or church administrators, as summarized in Table 1 below. This is hardly surprising, given the fact that the professionalization of historiography advanced at its own relatively slow pace in the "ivory towers", in comparison to Finland. However, they did provide valuable source-material to modern historians, especially the earlier ones, despite their undoubtedly biased perspectives.

[535] Gray 2004a, 153.

[536] E.g. Daly 1997.

Table 1. *A selection of Irish monographs on the history of the Great Famine from 1848 to 1956*

Author	Title	Publication	Background
Charles Trevelyan	The Irish Crisis	1848	Civil Servant at the Treasury
John Mitchel	The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)	1861	Irish nationalist, revolutionary, expatriate
John O'Rourke	The History of the Great Famine	1875	Catholic clergy
Charles Gavan Duffy	Four Years of Irish History 1845-1849. A Sequel to "Young Ireland".	1883	Irish nationalist, revolutionary, expatriate
W.P. O'Brien	The Great Famine in Ireland and a Retrospect of the Fifty Years 1845-95	1896	Former Poor law and Local Government Inspector
T. O'Herlihy	The Famine 1845-1847: A Survey of its Ravages and Causes	1947	Reverend
R. Dudley Edwards and T. Desmond Williams (eds.)	The Great Famine: Studies in Irish History 1845-52	1956	Academic historians

Beyond the topical Famine historiographies, however, the public did have a demand for history: for national history, for local history, for sectarian history, and for historical fiction, many of which included some narrative or historical interpretation of the Famine. Chris Morash has estimated that the volume of famine literature by the end of the nineteenth century contained at least fourteen novels, over one hundred poems, and a number of plays.[537] This abundance of literature has been acknowledged and researched in a number of studies.[538] However, drawing a distinction or analysing the overlapping threads between the categories of famine literature, famine historiography, famine memoirs, and famine folklore has never really been attempted, further than the rare recognition by some historians that differences between the sources exist.[539] To summarize, modern professional historians did not deliver

[537] Morash 2012, 640.

[538] Morash 1989; Morash 1995; Corporaal, Cusack and Janssen 2012; Fegan 2002; Kelleher 1997; Bexar 2016; Muhle 2011; Morash 2012.

[539] E.g. Ó Ciosáin 2004; Daly 1997; Ó Gráda 1999, 194-196.

famine histories, because the professional craft was not established and mature enough to interpret the event as history until a century later, which resulted in void of historical explanation ready to be filled by other narrators.

The following three main narrative trends that I have identified overlap to some degree with the categories created by Peter Gray. This may be purely a coincidence, sprung from an observation of the same sources, or it may be an unconscious borrowing from a keynote lecture he delivered at the Global Legacies of the Great Irish Famine conference organized by Radboud University in Nijmegen 2013. This keynote was later published in an article collection from that same conference.[540] However, I came across the article version only after I already had sketched out my own taxonomy. Nevertheless, suffice it to say that I do feel an enormous debt to Peter Gray's work, whom I regard as the most compelling historian, both in depth and scope, on the question of the Famine and the political and historical uses of its memory in the nineteenth century. The different path that I take in relation to his work is mainly one of nomenclature, and perhaps a slightly differing emphasis.

5.3.1 STATE-LOYALISM

The first explicit account of the Famine, *The Irish Crisis*, was written by the Chief-Secretary of the Treasury Sir Charles Trevelyan, and published while the Famine was still an ongoing process in 1848. Trevelyan's account was a defence of the charges levelled against the Government's relief policies. In other words, it was a bureaucratic and politicized response to a politically already controversial situation. It was not a scholarly work known for a detached and impartial narrative. Having said that, it forms an indispensable resource to how the government response to the Famine was perceived by the Treasury's most powerful state official. And, it is as contemporary a source for the Famine as a source could be.

Trevelyan began by stating his belief that eventually permanent good would arise from 'the Irish famine of 1847'. He traced the main culprit of the Famine to the overwhelming dependence on the potato, and in particular on one variety, the Lumper. The failure of the potato had not only caused the crisis, but was an underlying reason for many other social and economic ills, many centred on the issue of property, that negatively affected the Irish 'nation'.[541] The selling of the encumbered estates was presented as the most effective remedy,[542] a policy suggestion that did become law through the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849. Furthermore, Trevelyan presented a defensive interpretation of all the measures that the government had hitherto taken, to show that it had taken the plight of Ireland very seriously. He also outlined the

[540] Gray 2014.

[541] Indeed, he did refer to the Irish as a separate nation. Trevelyan 1848, 1; 2-23.

[542] Trevelyan 1848, 31.

reasons why some of the schemes had not had the intended results, diverting blame for the failure of the practical implementation of relief works to either the individual relief administers, the House of Commons, the Irish landlords, or the general character of the Irish peasantry.

One of the lessons learned was that no government could help a country except by 'making it a local charge'.[543] This would incentivize the local upper classes to do more for the local lower classes. Government relief carried the risk of making the population, or any social class for that matter, idle, which would be the worst mischief. In this regard the Famine taught a painful but important lesson on the importance of self-help on a local, national (Ireland), as well as an imperial level. The crisis of famine and moral degeneration were not only Irish concerns, but echoed a shared adversity. Trevelyan stated, '[t]he uniting power of a common misfortune has also been felt throughout the British Empire',[544] and went on to point out how political dissensions had given room for cooperation across UK's internal nationalities and within Irish denominational lines. In a sense, the Famine was not only an Irish famine, but a British famine as well.[545] In subsequent decades the English public refereed to the period as the 'hungry forties'.[546] Importantly, he claimed 'every sacrifice was submitted to without a murmur by the great body of the people.'[547]

On this point it is important to acknowledge that some degree of uncertainty prevailed among contemporary observers concerning the definitions of national boundaries. Indeed, in mid-nineteenth century Britain and Ireland it was not always clear what nation was meant in relation to the state [see article V]. The terms were used with enormous flexibility, and from an Irish perspective nation and national could refer to Ireland, Irish Ireland, Celtic Britain, both Ireland and Britain, or the whole empire. As a case in point, Trevelyan himself was not consistent in his usage of nation. In addition, the fluid usage of the concept is what provoked Isaac Butt's denunciation of the Rate in Aid scheme: 'What state? – what nation? If the imposition of your tax answers – Ireland! then you have no answer to the demand that the Irish state and nation should have her separate legislature, and her own exchequer.'[548]

In terms of a broader interpretative context, Trevelyan's account manifested a defensive view of government responsibility. We can call it a state-loyalist narrative. In this regard it reminds one very much of the Fennoman interpretation, most vividly exemplified by Agathon Meurman's defence of the Finnish Senate's relief policies during the Finnish famine [see article II]. Loyalists of the state or government have a need to refute accusations of government ineptitude. Both Meurman and Trevelyan,

[543] Trevelyan 1848, 185.

[544] Trevelyan 1848, 191.

[545] Gray 2014, 40-41; Gray 2015.

[546] Trentmann 2008, 33-45.

[547] Trevelyan 1848, 194.

[548] Isaac Butt quoted in Gray 2015, 94.

although separated by significant political, temporal, and spatial contexts, employed very similar rhetorical means in their accounts. They both stressed the natural causation of the famine and the limits of government action, as well as the extraordinary extent of government action, the enormity of the task at hand, the impossibility of helping a people that is unwilling to help itself, and finally, gratitude toward the sacrificial, law-abiding, and cooperative character of the suffering people.

5.3.2 NATIONALIST NARRATIVE

The second Famine account, probably the most commented upon in terms of subsequent famine historicizations, was penned by John Mitchel in 1861 and titled *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)*. John Mitchel (1815-1875) was born to a Presbyterian family and was an ardent nationalist politician and a republican admirer. He parted ways Daniel O'Connell's non-violent repeal campaign and endorsed revolutionary and violent means to overthrow the English rule in Ireland. He was one of the leaders of the Young Ireland movement and a writer in the *Nation*. In the 1840s the Irish national movement, embodied by the Repeal association and led by O'Connell, split between the non-violent and legal approach of O'Connell and the more hardliner revolutionary Young Ireland group gathered around the newspaper *Nation*, to which Mitchel was a prominent contributor. In 1848 Mitchel was convicted of treason and sent to Van Diemen's land (Tasmania), whence he later escaped and settled in the United States, where he continued to criticize British rule in Ireland in his writing. Indeed, it was the emigrated Irish communities abroad who harboured the most intense grievances and bitterness against British rule in Ireland. John Mitchel was one of them, but so were many other Fenians such as Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa (who lost his family during the Famine) and John Devoy. In fact, much of American ethnic identity construction is based on an emigration narrative where political and economic oppression in the home country is given an essential role. With regards to the creation story of Irish-Americans, Kevin O'Neill has called the Famine the 'charter myth' that explains their presence in the new land.[549]

The core of Mitchel's narrative is manifested in its most famous dictum 'The Almighty, indeed, sent the potato blight, but the English created the famine'.[550] He presented the Famine within a continuum of Anglo-Saxon oppression, and suggested that the government had orchestrated a concentrated effort to remove a substantial part of the population from their lands. The government was responsible for a tyrannical legal system, coercive measures, exporting grain, and dissolving the Celtic population and tongue from Ireland. In short, the English government was evil and malevolent through and through. It worked together in a conspiracy with Irish landlords,

[549] O'Neill 2001. See also Kelly 2016.

[550] Mitchel, 1861, 219.

aiming to clear out the 'surplus population'[551] from the small holdings they occupied, a population that since Catholic Emancipation and the termination of the forty-shilling franchise in 1829 had lost their political power. Prior to Emancipation landlords had subdivided holdings, a development made possible due to the efficiency of potato cultivation, in order to get as many as possible votes from their dependent constituencies; but, after the disenfranchisement, the subdivisions had become useless in terms of securing votes and the tenants were merely an obstacle to consolidating the holdings into larger grazing fields. The Poor Laws, the Devon Commission, the easy ejecting of tenants, and assisted emigration were devised in order to clear this surplus population away from Irish soil, already prior to and in an intensifying manner during the Famine.[552] Mitchel's proposed solution to all this misery was that the Union should have been, or at the time of his writing ought to be, repealed. According to him, it was the Union that had facilitated a free trade market in and out of Ireland, and by repealing it the export of Irish food would somehow come to an end. To this end, he propagated violent insurrection[553] to overthrow the evil conspiracy of the landlord class and the English government.

Mitchel's story is often regarded as the embodiment of a classical nationalist narrative.[554] His book became the leading authority on the Famine period for any popular Irish historian. However, during the first decades after its publication it is questionable how widely *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)* was actually read. A.M. Sullivan's best-selling work the *Story of Ireland*, first published in 1867,[555] apparently was influenced by Mitchel's book. Sullivan's anti-English rhetoric in this book was sharp; the government was made responsible for the 'expulsion' of Irish men and women, and John Mitchel was presented as some kind of national hero.[556] However, what is interesting about Sullivan is his complete U-turn after his period of serving as a MP in Westminster, during which he came to revise his thoughts about the "evil empire".[557] He wrote a new book called the *New Ireland* published in 1878, in which he offered a revised view of government efforts in alleviating the crisis, with no hint of a nationalist influence. *New Ireland* was a state-loyal narrative following the narrative tradition of Trevelyan's example, although it did display some degree of sympathy for what it regarded as the hard-pressed landlord classes.[558] In 1884, A.M Sullivan returned to the topic in a book co-authored with Sylvester O'Halloran, *The Pictorial History of Ireland*, where

[551] Mitchel 1861, 66, 69.

[552] Mitchel 1861, 63-73.

[553] 'There were not half enough of them shot'. Mitchel 1861, 67.

[554] Gray 2004b, 49.

[555] Foster 2001, 6.

[556] Sullivan 1867, 546-566.

[557] Foster 2001, 57.

[558] Sullivan 1877, 57-68.

Sullivan wrote the chapters on the unionist period and the Famine period. Here the emphasis was less on the suffering caused by the Famine than on an apologetic portrayal of the Young Irelanders' course of action: 'The verdict of public opinion – the judgement of their own country – the judgement of the world – has done them justice. It has proclaimed their unwise course the error of noble, generous, and self-sacrificing men.'[559]

Within Ireland, Mitchel's narrative was faced with a pair of counternarratives; this opposition came from the O'Connellites, on the one hand, who preferred non-violent and legally justifiable means to achieve the repeal of the Union or some version of Home Rule, and after the Famine from an increasingly assertive Roman Catholic hierarchy.[560] In addition to these two counternarratives, Mitchel's narrative was intellectually incompatible with the academic and political orthodoxy of the currents of the political economists, although it does not seem to have inspired much of an academic response in Ireland, at least not immediately.[561] It is therefore important to note that what in the twentieth century seems a natural division into two opposing nationalistic strands - Catholic Irish nationalism and Protestant unionism - was not an established fact in the mid-nineteenth century. Many Protestants were avowed nationalists, and many Catholics were unionists. As also discussed in article V, Irish nationalism and Irish Catholicism did not effectively coalesce into a coherent and shared ideological narrative until the late nineteenth century, when Irish Home Rule began to appear increasingly more probable.[562]

To be sure, Daniel O'Connell was one of the first to harness faith to nationalist political identity,[563] but we should be careful not to overblow its significance, because the disintegration of the national movement in the 1840s is evidence for that strategy's inefficiency. Furthermore, the Young Irelanders and those later nationalists who identified with its cause had a tedious and conflicting relationship with the legacy of Daniel O'Connell. They saw O'Connell's alliance with the Whigs, his support for repeal of the Corn Laws, his unnerving siding with the Catholic Church, and his denunciation of the nationalists who contributed to the *Nation* (i.e. Young Irelanders) as an old man's blunder, achingly close to betrayal of the national cause.[564] Charles Gavan Duffy, as Mitchel and the rest of the group behind the *Nation,* did not support free trade, at least not within the scope of the Union, and wanted trade

[559] Sullivan [and O'Halloran] 1884, 23.

[560] Barr and Ó Corráin 2017, 69-75.

[561] Unless we count the English historian Anthony Froude's commentaries on the topic as such an example. Gray 2014, 56.

[562] Pašeta 1999, 45. See also Heffernan's article on priests' indecisiveness on the matter during the revolutionary period. Heffernan 2017, 497-504.

[563] Barr and Ó Corráin 2017, 75.

[564] For example Duffy 1883, 21-56, 110-159.

barriers between Ireland and the rest of the UK.[565] In other words, the topic of boundaries and where to erect them (as discussed in the introduction) was essential to interpreting the cause of the Famine, especially when the interpretation was influenced by a nation-building ideology.

For the Catholic hierarchy, the greatest obstacle was not that Mitchel was critical of the government or the landlords as such, as many others shared his point of view, but his commitment to violent means to overthrow the social order. Many Catholic churchmen shared in principle, perhaps, the target of Mitchel's disdain, but not his means. The Church hierarchy was committed to upholding a morally sustainable social order, and respecting authority was the central tenet of this ideology.[566] Essentially, there is nothing particularly Catholic about this, as all established religions tend to be conservative when they are confronted with social change. The same also applies to the Lutheran church in Finland. However, the Irish context, as a multidenominational society, easily exacerbates the salient impact of denominational differences with political overtones.

For many nationalists, on the other hand, the Catholic clergy, with its providentialist interpretation, passive and submissive leadership during the Famine, and the humiliating begging conduct of other Castle Catholics, seemed to be some sort of fifth columnists.[567] To the extent that the Catholic Church had been responsible for instilling a submissive, vanquished, and unmasculine apathy in the people[568], many hard line nationalists regarded it more as an obstacle toward independence. This ideological clash was to continue in the strained relationship between the Catholic clergy and the Irish Republican or Fenian Brotherhood.[569]

Within the framework of mnemohistory, to the nationalist mind-set, and especially to those who could remember the period, the Famine remained troublesome. On the on hand, the Famine symbolised a key turning point in the nationalist narrative, one that revealed the devastating effect of English rule in Ireland. As such it served the nationalist agenda. It manifested the root problem or symptomized the main disease that the Irish nation was faced with. On the other hand, it also represented the failure of the people to rise in rebellion when the occasion presented itself, which was a dispiriting example for the nationalist cause. In this sense, in nationalist thought the Famine also symbolized the shame of poverty,[570] and perhaps the crisis of Irish

[565] Duffy 1883, 46.

[566] Kerr 1994, 124.

[567] For historical context of the Catholic Church's role during the Famine, see Kerr 1994, 124-166. Also on Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa's relation to the Catholic clergy, see Kenna 2015, 52-53.

[568] See also Gray 2004b, 49.

[569] Kelly 2011; Jenkins 2008.

[570] Walker 2014.

manliness,[571] as they manifested the feminine[572] imprint of the colonized and subjugated Celt [compare to article II].

5.3.3 DIVINE / NATURAL DETERMINISM

The third famine history monograph was *The History of the Great Irish Famine* by Canon John O'Rourke, published in 1875. O'Rourke's narrative could be characterized as falling somewhere in-between the nationalist and state-loyal extremes, or a bit anachronistically as a predecessor to modern Irish historical scholarship. Nonetheless, it has a unique narrative ethos that diverges from the two earlier ones, an ethos that Peter Gray defines as a Catholic Famine History.[573] In terms of its strictly Irish context and narrative framework, the stress on Catholicism is certainly justified, but in terms of transnational famine narratives the emphasis on Catholicism impedes the recognition of narrative similarities found in other non-Catholic contexts, or beyond Europe.[574] Therefore, I hesitate to categorize O'Rourke's narrative as Catholic history. In a narrow context that focuses only on Ireland, it is certainly natural to emphasize the narrative's denominational nature, but in a more universal sense it echoes a divine or natural determinism also found in other religions and cultures.

O'Rourke was critical of governments, yet he was state-loyal. He was sympathetic to the plight of the Irish people, and to Daniel O'Connell and the efforts to unite political and religious groups, but remained critical of the rest of the political class, the practical application (but not the intentions) of the relief schemes, and the landlords' role in exacerbating the crisis. O'Rourke welcomed the moral blessings of philanthropy, the policy initiatives pursued by Lord George Bentinck, and examined other political actors in detail and critically.

The History of the Great Irish Famine has a surprisingly modern historical style to it. O'Rourke presents a short history of previous famines in Ireland, the introduction of the potato to Ireland, the first sightings of the potato blight, the politicization of the relief efforts, starvation and epidemics, emigration, and the social impact of the whole process. Thus, the Famine is integrated into a larger historicized master-narrative, although it is not the same as John Mitchel's or Charles Trevelyan's. One of O'Rourke's main sources was Trevelyan's *Irish Crisis,* backed up with and critically balanced against other governmental papers, newspaper sources, questionnaires, and memoirs. He

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[571] Jospeh Valente's discussion relates to the period from 1880 to 1922, but his main argument, the double-binding of the ideal Irish male role-model, also makes sense in the reading of nationalist texts in the mid-nineteenth century. Valente 2011.

[572] On the feminization of famine, see Kelleher 1997.

[573] Gray 2014, 45.

[574] This point refers not only to its similarities with Finland, but also as a universal phenomenon. See e.g. Edgerton-Tarpley 2008, 71.

had a specific focus on Skibbereen, but did interpret the crisis as an all-Ireland shock affecting every region. As Peter Gray succinctly put it, it is unusual for its time in that the author attempts to offer 'at least a measure of historical contextualization.'[575]

O'Rourke's master narrative focused on defending the perseverance and industry of the 'Irish race'.[576] Furthermore, he denounced claims that the misery and destitutions could be accredited to the Roman Catholic faith. Indeed, a benefit of the Famine, and a sign of the noble and virtuous character of Irish Roman Catholicism, was the philanthropy it gave rise to across the Christian world.[577] In the end, irrespective of whether the Famine could have been avoided or not, it had turned Irish self-sacrifice into a moral virtue for the whole world to see. And the world itself was in turn a better place due to the charity it had showed to Ireland. In this sense, O'Rourke's narrative resembles one born out of religious conviction and faith. No matter how much the catastrophe was affected by human agency, in the end it would not have happened had it not been in accordance to God's plan, which brings the narrative closer to folklore interpretations of divine displeasure as the principal cause than any other written historical account of it.[578] This religious interpretation, in this case Catholic, does not have an equivalent in the Finnish context, probably because religion did not become such a divisive national marker in Finland. However, a similar kind of deterministic reasoning can be found in the naturalization explanation, seen all across the Finnish famine literature as well as famine historiography. In this model, divine intervention in humans' lives is replaced by natural intervention. The similarity between the divine and natural is that both are unavoidable and inescapable to humans, and human agency, e.g. the concepts of culpability and responsibility, is reduced to a minor role.

O'Rourke remained somewhat critical of Trevelyan's state-loyalism, and regarded the government of the time as failing to fulfil its duties toward the Irish people. In this regard O'Rourke's account had a certain compassion towards the plight of the poor and the lack of efficient Irish political leadership: '[t]he best army cannot fight without generals, and in this battle against famine the Irish people had no leaders',[579] and furthermore 'at a most critical moment, standing between two years of fearful, withering famine, did the leaders of the Irish people, by their miserable dissensions, lay that people hopeless, prostration at the mercy of the British Cabinet, from which, had they remained united, they might have obtained means of saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of their countrymen'.[580]

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[575] Gray 2014, 60.

[576] O'Rourke 1875, 318-319.

[577] O'Rourke 1875, 331.

[578] Ó Ciosáin 2004, 227; Ó Ciosáin 2001, 98.

[579] O'Rourke 1875, 40.

[580] O'Rourke 1875, 89.

This echoes a similar kind of militarized rhetoric that was applied by Fennoman Agathon Meurman's state-loyal *Nälkäwuodet 1860-luwulla*, however with the important difference that Meurman extolled the efficient and decisive leadership of J.V. Snellman, not the lack of it [see article II]. Consequently, famine is represented as a militarized struggle, and this metaphorical association demands that political leadership is valued according to the standards of war: losses are inevitable, community is the purpose of struggle, sacrifice is admirable, leadership instils fighting spirit and perseverance, the lack of leadership causes chaos, panic, and demoralization in the ranks, etc. The utility of this metaphor - FAMINE AS BATTLE - is that it can seemingly invent battles were no battles have occurred, which for identity building is a useful trick. In Finland, this metaphor was used to create a positive projection of a national starvation for the benefit of future generations, as admirable as soldiers dying in battle [see article II]. On the other hand, the hollowness of such rhetoric is evident by its asymmetrical use in Ireland for ideologically opposed projects.

The disappointment of the people's submissive character ran deep among Irish nationalists. Duffy recalled:

> *To lie down and die, like cattle in murrain, was base. No people are bound to starve while their soil produces food cultivated by their own hands. No other people in Europe would have submitted to such a fate. But the leader whom they were accustomed to follow had involved himself in a tangle of false doctrines by his unhappy Peace Resolutions, and he exhorted them to endure all with patience and submission. His son had the amazing intrepidity to add that if they starved with complete resignation the Repeal of the Union was near at hand.*[581]

The Fenian land-leaguer Michael Davitt, much influenced by Mitchel, was extremely exasperated by the feeble behaviour, referring to 'the epidemic of national cowardice which was common to all Ireland' at that time.[582] In addition, he added that 'as the peasants had chosen to die like sheep rather than retain that food in a fight for life, to live or die like men, their loss to the Irish nation need not occasion many pangs of racial regret.'[583] In the end, it is intriguing to see, in two major nineteenth century famines that took place in peacetime contexts, how in both cases we can find asymmetric militarized valour–rhetoric utilized.

This is an observation not so much for famine studies as it is for studies of narratives of nationalism. It further highlights the strategic importance of military and battle rhetoric in nation-building narratives. Moreover, it goes on

[581] Duffy 1883, 357-358.

[582] Davitt 1904, 57.

[583] Davitt 1904, 27.

to exemplify that in ideological projections of identity constructions oftentimes the form is more important than the content. In other words, the application of militarized rhetoric may lead to unpersuasive analogies such as an exaggerated glorification of famine victims or a mockery of their cowardice, but that is only their side-effect. Their main function is to urgently project an internationally "unique" and "correct" ideal national behaviour in times of crises.

Interestingly, A.M. Sullivan, in his state-loyal narrative *New Ireland*, had praised the recent 'excellent volume' by 'Rev. Mr. O'Rorke' and referred to the Report of the Society of Friends' Irish Relief Committee as the only competent accounts until the time of his writing.[584] One can read between the lines that Sullivan had also encountered some other accounts, most certainly Mitchel's works as seen in his previous book, but had revised his opinion of them in due course.

5.3.4 CORE TENETS OF IRISH FAMINE HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Trevelyan's *Irish Crisis*, Mitchel's *The Last Conquest*, and O'Rourke's *The History of the Irish Famine* were the originators of topical famine historiography in Ireland. They include the most enduring narrative tendencies of Irish famine historiography, even up to this day. Of course, modern famine scholars use a much wider source-base, theories, and methods, and sophisticated models, styles, and visualisations unavailable to these previous authors. However, these three narrative perspectives and the problems they raise are ever relevant in historiography and the broader historical literature:

1) State-loyalism; what is the state, and how do we historically assess loyalism towards it?
2) Nationalist narrative: what is the nation, and who has the privilege to define it?
3) Natural determinism / divine plan: Was it unavoidable? Could the crisis have been mitigated, or even exacerbated (an often overlooked contrafactual question)? What about the human agency –factor?

Much had changed between the 1840s and the 1880s.[585] In terms of mnemohistory, it is worth pointing out that the share of the Irish population that could potentially remember the period had sunk to approximately one third of the whole population. Demographically, Ireland's population had dropped from a pre-Famine level of c. 8.5 million to 5.2 million in 1881, in large proportion due to increased emigration. Over the years 1851 to 1880

[584] Sullivan 1878, 67.

[585] For a brief overview see Lee 2008, 37-66.

approximately 2.6 million Irish men and women had emigrated.[586] Those who had experienced the period as adults were approaching ages over 50 and were quickly passing away, but the Famine children were in their prime adulthood at the time of the Land War from 1879 to 1882. Consequently, the majority of the population could not rely on their memory for a recollection of the Famine, but had to consult other sources. In other words, the demand for literature on the Famine was on the rise simultaneously as political and social tensions concerning issues of land, landlordism, coercion and rebellion, education, and the church began to intensify.

Most importantly, expectations had changed,[587] which probably reflects a mnemohistorical progression in synchrony with historical change. This included the expectation of the benefits received from an invigorating new capitalism on Irish soil, a perspective that began to be outdated. Originally, this had been a Peelite proposition made from the opposition benches in the winter of 1849, eventually coming into effect as the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849, which had received some support in Ireland too.[588] It pre-empted by half a century the Irish Congested Districts Board that came into effect in the 1890s.[589]

The nationalists and the state-loyalists, however, were internally divided on the role of landlords during the Famine. Some of these factions supported the Peelite reshuffling of land properties because it diverged from the moralist and natural cause rhetoric prevalent in 1848 and after. Some supported the free trade in land initiative, precisely because it worried and targeted the infamous Irish landlords, which was a class that many in Ireland and Britain regarded as degenerate and an obstacle to reform. Any change in this regard could be viewed as potentially a change for the better [see also article V]. For the nationalists, the landlords were a class ridden with complexity: as far as they were "Irish", they were good; if they were absentee landlords, then they were bad; as far as they supported their peasantry in times of need, they were good; if they resorted to ejections, rent-seeking, and forced emigration, then they were bad. Religious affiliation could also make a difference in the determination of a landlord's credentials. If a nationalist was a person of faith, then individual co-religious landlords may have been perceived more favourable than others. A protestant nationalistically-minded landlord could be perceived as better than an empire-serving Castle Catholic.

Duffy wrote about the gentry, which included the landlord class alongside doctors and clergymen: 'The gentry, who were responsible in the first place for the protection of the people, from whom they drew their income, insisted that the calamity was an imperial one and ought to be borne out of the exchequer

[586] Vaughan and Fitzpatrick 1978, 3, 261-262.

[587] Vaughan 1994, 208-216; Foster 2014, 1-28.

[588] Gray 1999, 214-215.

[589] Gray 2006, 208.

of the Empire. It was an equitable claim.'[590] In other words, he had some understanding of the argument that Ireland, in theory, could have been better integrated into the Union structures and regarded as an integral part of the whole, thus contradicting the nationalist cause, although he did regard it as a naïve belief. According to Duffy, much of the gentry had responded selfishly and indifferently towards the suffering poor.[591] On the other hand were those nationalists, such as Isaac Butt in his later life[592] and the previously discussed Mitchel, who only saw the scheme as a continuation of the conquest of Ireland. The real remedy according to them would have been granting the tenant farmers rights to, or even ownership of, the land they tilled. For nationalists, landlords as a social group were unreliable, but on the other hand as long as landlords shared a common enemy, the British government, they were tolerated by the nationalists.

In light of the mnemohistorical progression it seems timely that O'Rourke initiated his work in the 1870s, and it is this context that also makes Charles Gavan Duffy's memoirs of the 1840s and Young Ireland politics, published in two volumes in 1880 and 1883, so timely.[593] By this time a significant proportion of the population that could not remember the Famine (born after 1850) had become literate and reached adulthood, so there understandably was a market for famine-related memoirs and histories. In addition to these, the republication of Trevelyan's *Irish Crisis* in 1880 can be seen as an additional example of the rhetorical battle over the mnemohistorical interpretation aimed at the younger generations, regarding how the relief policies during the Famine were conducted and what kind of meaning they had for Ireland's later development. Rural unrest in the form political agitation and even open rebellion, increased emigration, agrarian outrages targeting improperly behaving landlords, and the occasionally and locally resurfacing potato blight provided a sense, especially for the older generation, that the crisis had not been totally overcome.[594] The Land War and subsequent Land Acts became interrelated with these questions, the question of Indian famines in the 1870s, and the development of the Indian Famine Codes,[595] all of which underpinned the question of what responsibility and specialised relief programmes governments should take in relieving famines in its peripheral and backward regions.[596]

This is the context in which the formerly poor law and local government inspector W.P. O'Brien to write *The Great Famine in Ireland and a Retrospect of the Fifty Years 1845-95 with A Sketch of the Present Condition and Future*

[590] Duffy 1883, 356.

[591] Duffy 1883, 358.

[592] Butt 1866.

[593] Duffy 1880; Duffy 1883.

[594] See Gray 2014, 41.

[595] Brennan 1984.

[596] See e.g. Gray 2006.

Prospects of the Congested Districts, published in 1896.[597] He too was a person who had personal direct experience of the Famine, as a local administrator, and wanted to make public his version as a first-hand witness, much like the other authors mentioned above.

O'Brien's account followed a state-loyal narrative, which was hardly surprising due to his personal experience during the Famine as a government inspector at the Board of Works,[598] and was a minor variant of natural determinism. He contextualised his Famine account within the history of previous and latter minor famines in Ireland. Furthermore, as a background he reflected on the substantial population growth and the general level of poverty in the country prior to the Famine,[599] thus suggesting the influence of a malthusian paradigm on his narrative. He viewed Robert Peel's government relief policies until the change of government in the summer of 1846 in a relatively favourable light,[600] but regarded Russell's policies as 'a serious misfortune, at any rate as far as Ireland was concerned.'[601] O'Brien believed, again on the authority of his personal experience, that the Board of Works' failure was not attributable to the organisation's own efforts, but rather to the enormity of the task and to the failure of the Irish upper and middle classes to lend their support to the Government's initiatives,[602] although without specifying what that support in practice should have been. Consequently, he echoed a veiled deterministic and state-loyal perspective. The implication of his narrative was that blame could not be directed against any particular political identity. In this sense, it resembled the narrative found in P.W. Joyce's history textbook for the National schools from 1900 onwards. They both seem to represent a (sub-)conscious attempt to minimise disunion amongst the Irish political identities within the United Kingdom. In my view this seems to be a reaction to the rising prospects of Home Rule.

During the 1880s, Irish Home Rule began to be seen as politically possible and, indeed, a plausible solution to the so called 'Irish Question' in the United Kingdom polity.[603] This brought to the surface a new complexity in issues of identity,[604] and one reflection of that is the transformation of Anglo-Irish upper-class Lady Augusta Gregory (1852-1932). According to her unionist view, it was the duty of the upper classes 'to teach the people how to "starve with courage", if it came that, rather than encouraging them in lawless means of survival', which Joseph Valente connects to her criticism of Parnell and Land League activity previous to her rapprochement with cultural

[597] O'Brien 1896.

[598] O'Brien 1896, 83, 99.

[599] O'Brien 1896, 1-63.

[600] O'Brien 1896, 89.

[601] O'Brien 1896, 83.

[602] O'Brien 1896, 104–108.

[603] Biagini 2007.

[604] Foster 2014, 1-28.

nationalism.[605] Mnemohistorically speaking, she could not remember the Famine, but her views of it were based on oral tradition and literature, which formed the background to her opinions on the rural and economic unrest in the 1860s and 70s and the formation of the Land league. This upper class view of the people's martyrdom, the noble starvation, is nothing new in the comparative light of famine interpretations in Finland [see article II], although it may have been somewhat less publicly voiced in Ireland because of the different political context and the dominance of other narrative traditions.

The actuality of Home Rule had the additional divisive effect of highlighting political identities according to religious affiliation. The social groundwork for religious segmentation had been laid throughout the century: in schools, hospitals, and other associations; however, the realisation of it brought political tensions publicly to the surface, especially in Ulster where Protestants formed the majority.[606] Protestants feared that an independent Ireland would become a Roman Catholic Ireland, and thus their sense of insecurity aligned previous identity categories more strongly towards a dichotomy: Irish nationalists as Catholics and Protestants as Unionist. The previous generation of nationalists had not had this problem, as they were denominationally a much more diverse group. Furthermore, they had been opposed by both the Catholic Church and the State, and additionally were more idealistic in their nationalistic ethos.

The following famine historiography was a recirculation of these core famine narratives.[607] This template was reflected in history education in schools as well [article V]. Unsurprisingly, the National schools proclaimed a predominantly a state-loyal narrative. In the late 1890s, when the theoretical foundation of the state began to be questioned as a result of Irish Home Rule, and as signalled by the introduction of P. W. Joyce's history textbook in the curriculum, a deterministic and moderately nationalistic narrative attained more influence and eventually, after independence, all obstacles for a full nationalistic narrative were removed. The Christian Brothers, on the other hand, initially and predominantly professed a natural and divine determinism, adding a pinch of state-loyalism. The intensity of their nationalistic narrative was kept in check by these two other narrative frames. Only as the prospects of home rule began to be politically acceptable throughout whole UK state polity did their state-loyalism begin to wane, and was eventually replaced by the nationalist narrative manifested in their *Irish History Reader* 1905.

[605] Valente 2011, 75.

[606] Comerford 2003, 109-114.

[607] For an almost similar categorization, see Gray 2014.

5.4 FAMINE MNEMOHISTORY IN INDEPENDENT IRELAND: LITERATURE, FOLKLORE, AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

It has often been suggested that the Famine centenary in the 1940s and 50s was left unmarked, or that its commemoration gathered little attention.[608] However, this perception seems to be more an unsubstantiated assumption, based on the spectacular commemoration projects that unfolded in the 1990s and 2000s. Compared against this background, the commemorations pursued in the 1940s may seem scant, however a closer look at the period reveals that the Famine's centenary was by no means left unremarked. Could it be that scholars expected a bit too much from the Famine centenary commemorations, and with disappointment concluded that there was none? In the following sub-chapter, I will present how in the mid-twentieth century Irish Free State the Famine was commemorated and historicized for the broader public.

As a first remark, it is worth noting, based on Figure 3, that in 1926 a little less than 3 percent, or 88.000 of the total population of the Irish Free State could with any credibility claim to have witnessed the Famine. This cohort was at that time 75 years of age or older. The majority had only been newborn babies during the Famine, which makes the meaning of "memories" and the significance attributed to them somewhat questionable. By 1936 this cohort, now aged 85 or more, had dropped to only c. 11.500 individuals, consisting of only 0.38 per cent of the total population. In 1951, only 30 of these people, at the honourable age of 100, were still alive. The first witness narrators were becoming visibly harder to find.

Politics had also changed. The Irish Civil War was an internal battle over the essence of Irish republicanism. Irish militarism had traditionally been aimed against the state, but during the 1920s and 30s it was forced to define itself politically.[609] This was most successfully done through the leadership of Éamon de Valera (an anti-treatyist during the Civil War) and his founding of the Fianna Fáil party in 1926. The new party embarked on a project to republicanize the Irish Free State through democratic means. This also meant a rebranding of the Irish republican-inspired military tradition into a constitutional and state-loyal militancy. This project came to fruition after the general election in 1932, when Fianna Fáil formed the government with De Valera as the President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State. The political program of Fianna Fáil, besides the constitutional process of finalizing the Irish republic, underlined protectionism that resulted in a trade war with Britain during the next decade, a belief in centralized government,

[608] See Mark-Fitzgerald 2013, 59; Ó Gráda, 2006b, 234-235.

[609] Kissane 2013.

promotion of the Irish language, and an endorsement of rural self-sufficiency and Catholic ideals.[610]

The principled insistence on striving for national self-sufficiency, sovereignty, and neutrality, especially during the Second World War, much to the diplomatic irritation of the USA and the UK, meant that Ireland was spared from the worst bloodshed.[611] However, the war did push Irish society into a period called the Emergency, a period of war economy, with rationing, forced tillage, and shortages of all sorts linked to international economic blockades.[612] During the centenary decade of the Famine, with war and famine raging on the continent, the usual tropes of famines - hunger, relief, destitution, and questions of government culpability - had a greater reality than many would have wished for.

Other factors that had an effect on mnemohistory also changed. The founding of the Irish Free State in 1923 had ramifications for history education in schools. The National schools and the Christian Brothers had been two competing school systems prior to independence [article V]. However, in 1925 the Christian Brothers rejoined the National school system. Catholicism, in the form of the Christian Brothers' educational scheme, was once again compatible with the National school's framework. The de facto denominational character of the schools was recognized by the state. The state funded the schools but did not infringe on the management of the local administrations. This accorded the Catholic Church with greater influence in determining educational aims and policies, and less public and democratic transparency. In addition, in the Irish Free State the principle upon which education was to be based was that it should instil national pride and ideals. Primarily, Irish was to become the principle language of instruction in an effort to restore the public presence of the language, which had been in decline throughout the nineteenth century. Secondly, history and geography were included in the curriculum, and this meant an exclusive focus on Irish history and geography.[613] In the Irish Free State, where the majority of the population were Roman Catholics, in contrast to its closest neighbour, the alignment of Catholicism and state-loyalism became less controversial than it had been during the Union.

Other famine-related commemorational projects also began to take shape. The previously mentioned Irish Folklore Commission – a project that collected folklore memories in the mid-1930s - is one case in point. Another is the success of Liam O'Flaherty's bestselling novel *Famine*, published in 1937. Gerard Healy's *The Black Stranger*, a famine play, was also staged by several different groups around the island, accompanied by positive reviews. The state

[610] Ferriter 2005, 358-379; Boyce 1995, 339-354.

[611] As a clarification, Northern Ireland as a part of the UK did receive a share of the Luftwaffe's air raids, and many Irish people served voluntarily in the Allied war effort.

[612] Evans 2014; Wills 2007.

[613] Coolahan 1981, 38-47.

also commissioned a historical essay collection in the form of a one-thousand page monograph on the great famine, 1845-52, instigated by Taoiseach Eamon De Valera in late 1943 or early 1944, as a centenary commemoration of the Famine. The original plan was to have the book in print in 1946.[614] In reality, this project only came to conclusion a decade later in the 517 pages long *The Great Famine: studies in Irish history, 1845-52,* edited by R. Dudley Edwards and T. Desmond Williams. In 1945, in relation to this project, another folklore questionnaire was begun with the help of the Irish Folklore Commission, thus contributing to the already existing famine folklore collection. As is typical for the Finnish case [see article II], it is not uncommon that events in popular culture, e.g. a successful novel on the Famine, may have triggered an awareness and greater interest in a topic amongst the political and academic community.

Against this background it is no surprise that Rev. T. O'Herlihy's little book *The Famine 1845-1847: A survey of its ravages and causes*, published 1947, emphasized its meaning for contemporaries by noting that any person over fifty years old knew someone who had been an eyewitness to 'the famine period', or the 'Bad Times' as he called them.[615] In addition, he connected its memorability to the Mitchelite master narrative of over 600 years of Irish oppression. Furthermore, learning about the Famine period was claimed to be especially important for the current readership, because so much had changed in the country during the last hundred years. This rise of prosperity and comfort only underlined the contrast with the doom and gloom of the Famine. The Famine was said to be historically unique in depth and scope, 'an epoch in Irish history',[616] yet confirmed the trends and impression of a longer history.

> *It is because the history of Ireland has been seered in the Irish mind from generation to generation that its reality stands out starkly as a block of six hundred years and more, which the refinements of modern life cannot modify or the wiles of pseudohistorians explain away.*[617]

This notion of pseudohistorians is interesting, and implies a sentiment of underlying contestation regarding proper history and historians. The IHS was launched in 1938, so Rev. O'Herlihy may have been referring to academic scholars as pseudohistorians. His "survey" did not come with any bibliography or source references, thus indicating that it was not the work of an academically trained historian, except a few mentions embedded in the text, e.g. John Mitchel's *History of Ireland*, newspaper articles, and institutional reports. Despite a lack of references, the content implies that the author was not unread regarding the subject matter.

[614] Ó Gráda 2006b, 234-250.

[615] O'Herlihy 1947, 6.

[616] O'Herlihy 1947, 38.

[617] O'Herlihy 1947, 5.

O'Herlihy's book is very much a product of its time. He made occasional references and comparisons to food shortages ravaging continental Europe during and after the Second World War, and linked these to the nationalist master narrative by emphasizing the artificiality of famines caused by foreign governments then and now.[618] Secondly, his narrative was not only a nationalist narrative, but also symbolized a convergence of nationalist and divine determinism, specifically the Catholic version of it: 'let us see what weight the hand of God is when it tries a nation.'[619] This convergence of the two master narratives may nowadays seem like an old cliché, but at that time it was closer to a novelty. In the 1940s independent Irish Free State, with its overwhelmingly strong identification with the Catholic Church, in contrast to Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, Catholicism and republican Nationalism could collude with each other in a manner that had been difficult under the Union. O'Herlihy did not support the militant rebellion in the Mitchelite way, but he did share the historical analysis that could almost justify such actions. The Catholic perspective is apparent in the way he condemns acts of proselytism during the Famine, and the spread of the Catholic faith across the globe due to the Irish exodus. In addition, his favourable view on charitable donations in times of crisis is typical for men of faith, inscribing positive meaning to famines.

Another interesting detail of O'Herlihy's work is the use of the euphemism "Bad Times". This same euphemism is not uncommon in folk memory, especially in school essays, which often utilized it as a title for the period.[620] Other Irish words used in similar ways are *An Gorta Mór* (the Great Hunger) or *An Drochshaol* (the Hard Times). In Finland, similar euphemisms were common: hard times, poor years, lean years, etc. It is a feature typical of famines that within the period of mnemohistory, or for famines with lesser mortality such as Sweden 1867-69,[621] there is often an abundance of terms used that only indirectly[622] describe the event.[623]

The mnemohistorical background to this phenomenon could be that during the mnemohistorical period there is an awareness amongst contemporaries of the multitude of experiences, memories, and perspectives stemming from the event, and of the fact that the second and third generations are the children of persons who were less affected by immediate starvation, destitution, and death. In other words, they are the children of the survivors and witnesses, and

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[618] O'Herlihy 1947, 21-25, 86-87.

[619] O'Herlihy 1947, 8.

[620] For example see The Schools' Collection, Volume 0092, Page 147: https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4427818/4347133/4448989 (last visit 17.4.2019). Also Póirtéir 1995.

[621] Västerbro 2018, 13.

[622] Here I regard the imposition of a loan word into another language as one form of circumventing the psychological burden of ascribing meaning to something that is difficult to express.

[623] E.g. Voutilainen 2017, 68.

from this perspective it is more natural to recall the period not as a period of starvation and death, but as an economically difficult period, like an economic depression that perhaps caused hardship but was somehow bearable. The famine generation would have been less inclined to talk to their offspring about their own experiences with "the famine", starvation, or "the hunger", and used phrases that made sense of their own experience. If they did not personally feel the hunger, but only saw or heard of signs of it, it makes sense to call it something other than starvation or hunger. On the other hand, if a narrator really had suffered extreme hardship, it would also make sense to ease their personal (potential) psychological anxiety by using a euphemism. Nevertheless, as one Irish informant explained: 'The year of the famine was always referred to by the old people as the year of the bad times.'[624]

Thus, it is only at the end of mnemohistory that phrasings like "hunger" or "famine" seems to become more frequently used. Perhaps they seem to reflect a more clinical, technical, or even detached perspective that is a more "accurate" description of the phenomena. For me as a historian, "Bad Times" seems more like an understatement of the enormity of the event, especially after consultation with a broader segment of qualitative and quantitative sources.

5.5 FAMINE CENTENARY COMMEMORATIONS AND THE END OF MNEMOHISTORY

In the 1940s the Famine was very topical in public discourse. The local press was especially active in educating its readership of the conditions in its area a century earlier. Out of a small selection of three local newspapers, from the 1st of January 1945 to the 31st of December 1948, the *Ballina Herald* reported 225 commemorative articles of which famine was specifically referred to in 76, the Southern Star (Skibbereen) reported 116 of which famine is specifically referred to in 17, and the *Tuam Herald* reported 86 of which famine is specifically referred to in 28.

Most of these references were commemorative within their retrospective genre, such as a series of articles in the Ballina Herald that were titled *Mayo Poorhouses*, *In the Famine Years, A Troubled Time*, *100 Years Ago*, and *Mayo 100 Years Ago*. The Southern Star also ran a serial of articles reminiscing about the Famine, at first title *The Great Famine* and then in 1947 conveniently renamed *Famine of 1847*. The Tuam Herald did not run a similar series, but it closely followed ongoing commemorative activity, and its editorials often contextualized topics related to the Famine, such as its plea for

[624] The Schools' Collection, Volume 0230, Page 127. https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4758450/4745016/4759375 (last visit 3.5.2019).

donations to the St. Vincent de Paul Society[625] and its appraisal of the Sisters of Mercy in their centenary year (the convent of the Sisters of Mercy had been established in Tuam in the Famine year of 1846).[626]

A large share of the commemorative rituals concerned heroic Fenians such as Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, the land-leaguer Michael Davitt,[627] or independence fighters such as Michael Collins. Compared to these major commemorative follow-ups, the Famine does seem to have been a little side tracked. But as Mark-Fitzgerald has noted, the "the imprecise nature of the Famine itself – its lack of central characters, linear narrative, heroic episodes or key dates – sat awkwardly with Irish traditions of both national and popular commemoration."[628] However, the cult status of these prominent leaders was tied to the Famine narrative. In Skibbereen, for instance, the annual Manchester Martyrs commemoration march and ceremony[629] ended at the 'Famine Memorial', i.e. the Abbey cemetery, where reportedly c. 8.000-10.000 famine victims lie buried.[630] The orations given by TD's[631] always connected the Famine experience as the main cause and background of the upbringing of the Fenian generation and, moreover, linking the 1848 and 1867 with 1916 and 1921. As TD, Mr. Eamonn O'Neill in 1946 said 'had there not been a Rossa there never would have been a Pearse'.[632] This underlines the Famine legacy as an essential ingredient in the commemorative tradition of the Fenian-Republican movement, in this case personified by the personality cult of O'Donovan Rossa. Another symbolically important monument in this tradition is the statute of the Maid of Erin, with the engravings for 1798, 1803,

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[625] Tuam Herald 15.12.1945, 'Help for the Poor'. A quote from the same article: 'What funds they have are dispensed among the truly deserving poor, many of whom are of the type who shrink from seeking public assistance.'

[626] Tuam Herald 12.1.1946, 'The Sisters of Mercy'.

[627] Both Davitt and O'Donovan Rossa were much embittered by the inefficiency of British relief efforts during the Famine, which inspired their political activism. Therefore, the narrative of their heroic personalities is often entwined with a nationalist interpretation of the Famine.

[628] Mark-Fitzgerald 2013, 61.

[629] This ceremony, originally organized by members of the Old IRA (1917-1922), had been revived by close co-operation and affiliation with the Rossa Memorial Committee in 1944. The traditional ceremony included a gathering of people at Callaghan's Cross, followed by a march through the town (Cork Road, North Street, The Square, Main Street, Bridge Street, Ilen Street, Schull Road to Abbey Cemetery). The procession included songs, praise, the laying of a cruciform wreath, and poem recitals, and was highlighted by an oration provided by an annually changing TD. The participants for 1946 included Old IRA men, the St. Fachtna's Silver Band, ex-servicemen of the Irish Army, members of the O'Donovan Rossa Memorial Committee and Urban District Council, Glun na Buaidhe and the local G.A.A. club, and a Company of Skibbereen's Local Defense Force - Forsa Cosanta Aituil. Southern Star 30.11.1946.

[630] See also Mark-Fitzgerald 2013, 141-147; Daly 2007.

[631] TD is shorted from Teachta Dála, i.e. members of the Irish parliament Dáil Éireann.

[632] Southern Star 30.11.1946.

1848, and 1867; the statute was located in the centre of Skibbereen at the Square, and was unveiled by O'Donovan Rossa himself in 1904.[633] A similar celebrated and commemorated local hero was Michael Davitt in Ballina, Co. Mayo. Davitt was born in Straide in 1846, and 1946 thus coincided with his centenary as well as the Famine's. Likewise, 1798 in 1948 received a long serial of articles of its sesquicentennial. Thomas Davis had been commemorated in Tuam in 1945.

The international context, with war and famine on the continent, and rationing and shortages during the Emergency, heightened the sense in which parallels were drawn between the 1840s and the 1940s. In 1945 the press was pondering how Ireland should respond to famine in Europe. For the most part, public opinion was in favour of relieving hunger in Europe, "To Help Ourselves and Others" as Tuam Herald's editorial commented. Others also saw an old debt to be repaid for the help that Ireland received during the Famine, but some also voiced concerns about shipping food out of poverty-stricken Ireland, suspecting an analogy to the events a hundred years ago.[634]

> *The great humanitarian work of providing food, clothing and other essentials to war-ravaged and famine-stricken Europe […] will give this country an opportunity of repaying a century-old debt. In Black '47 when famine stalked this land, the Irish people were succoured in one of the greatest fatalities that ever befell them, by many European countries. Ireland is now being given an opportunity to repay that debt, and no doubt the country will be equal to the occasion.*[635]

Sentiments infused with the Famine's national narratives were also voiced:

> *Strange coincidence that famine stalks the lands of Europe that are occupied by British forces to-day: is hunger the rattle that drags from the tail of the Imperial Lion?* [636]

The Tuam Herald reported a "Gaelic Lecture on Famine Years" on December 14th 1946. The author wrote that the lecturer, Father E. P. MacFhinn, "dealt with many aspects of the Famine period which are entirely ignored by historians who deal with the subject", and after the talk a lively discussion followed in which, amongst other things, it was said that the workhouses had been "concentration camps in disguise".[637] This echoed a similar metaphor as that made by O'Herlihy about pseudohistorians.

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[633] Kenna 2015, 229.

[634] Southern Star 15.3.1947, 'Famine Victims – Reply to No Aid statement at Kinsale'.

[635] Ballina Herald 26.5.1945, 'Ireland to Europe's Aid'.

[636] Tuam Herald 15.2.1947, "Echoes of the 'Bad Times'".

[637] Tuam Herald 14.12.1946, 'Gaelic Lecture on Famine Years'.

The winter of 1946-47 was unusually cold.[638] Called the Arctic Siege, these freezing blizzards disrupted many normal social functions in a country unaccustomed to freezing temperatures. Communications and transport halted, city traffic became chaotic, and many homes lacked heating because turf production was interrupted. A shortage of fuel in England caused a general shortage of fuel in Ireland as well, and a general malaise took hold. Consequently, people injured themselves; they slipped, suffered frostbite, became sick, and caught flues, which in poorly heated houses and with insufficient clothing for Arctic temperatures filled the hospitals with patients. Parallels drawn between 1847 and 1947 were accentuated.[639] There was a certain irony noted in fact that while Ireland was still struggling from the barely saved harvest of 1946, after a very hard winter that had momentarily isolated various communities, the government was responsible for shipping food out of the country while it was importing maize to Gaeltacht areas, such as Erris in the Blacksod area.

> *It is pleasing to note there was no ridicule for the use of the 'yellow buck,' which a decade of years ago was not considered necessary for feeding the pigs of Eire, but now it is of prime value for the people of Fiar Gaeltacht. And now that the cream of the Gaeltacht must live on bran and Indian meal while thousands of tons of wheat, beef, bacon, butter, sugar and other foodstus [sic] are sent overseas to the strangers the British Government cannot be so severely criticised for having taken our corn away in 'black' '47.*[640]

Beyond these discourses, the concept of famine was used quite liberally to describe a general scarcity of something, not only scarcity of food. Headlines such as fuel famine, stout famine, house famine, cigarette famine, and even water famine was reported. Although some dictionaries acknowledge that 'famine' may be considered synonymous with scarcity, it is not a universal usage. However, in 1940s Ireland it certainly was well established as synonymous with a general scarcity of any kind, and not just of food in a particular region.[641]

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[638] Kearns 2012.

[639] Tuam Herald 22.3.1947, 'Freak Weather and Famine Coincidences'.

[640] Ballina Herald 24.5.1947, 'Plight of Erris'.

[641] Irish Independent 26.10.1949, 'No Famine in Eggs Minister Says', 5; The Cork Examiner 10.2.1947, 'Fuel Famine Eased', 5; The Cork Examiner 24.11.1950, 'Coal Famine Talks', 2; The Cork Examiner 25.3.1947, 'Stout Famine Fears', 5; Irish Press 30.12.1950, 'Fish Famine in Dublin', 2; Irish Press 15.2.1949, 'Fuel Famine in South Donegal', 5;

Meath Chronicle 24.8.1946, 'House Famine in Westmeath', 3; Meath Chronicle 6.5.1950, 'Potato Famine in Navan', 1;

In late summer and early autumn of 1946 the harvest seemed to be in peril after a wet summer, and famine seemed to be at the doorstep. Great public efforts were made to help the farmers to harvest their fields when the weather changed for better. Many volunteered, and schools were closed so that as many people as possible could work to save the harvest. The newspapers reported a general feeling of relief that took over after the entire society had mobilized for a few weeks to ward off famine.

Famine was topical also in the theatres. On February 15, 1947, it was announced that the Tuam Little Theatre Guild intended to produce Gerard Healy's famine play "The Black Stranger", which the paper in later editions welcomed, advertised, reviewed with praise, and praised itself with the national acclaim that the company received in the Cavan Drama Festival, where it was awarded the Premier Award. The same play was also staged by professional theatres in Dublin and Cork, [642] and the same paper reviewed and welcomed *The Famine* – the book by Rev. T. O'Herlihy.

Other forgotten graveyards came to the fore as well. Biographies functioned as personalised accounts of the Famine period. The Rev. Thomas Brett's book *The Life of Dr. Duggan* brought to public attention the fact that thousands of inmates from the Tuam Workhouse had been buried in the nearby Carrowpeter Field, a revelation that initiated a project establishing a Famine memorial at the sight. On Sunday December 14th 1947 a memorial tablet was erected there by the Old Tuam Society. This event included a Mass at 10 o'clock in the Cathedral 'to repose the souls of the victims of the Famine'. After the unveiling ceremony His Grace (presumably the Archbishop of Tuam Joseph Walsh) gave a speech, after which the President of the Old Tuam Society, Dr. Costello, gave a presentation on the Famine conditions in the Tuam Workhouse and the graveyard.[643]

In the light of this newspaper overview, I believe one can with confidence state that although grandiose Famine monuments may have been scarce in the 1940s, Famine memory as a discursive trope was very much alive and kicking. This was the case despite, or perhaps precisely because of, the disappearance of the first famine generation, and the ongoing fading of the second.

Irish Independent 5.6.1950, 'Water Famine Threat', 7; The Cork Examiner 14.12.1950, 'Milk Famine at Killarney", 2;

Meath Chronicle 30.7.1949, 'Water Famine in Cavan', 2; Irish Press 18.1.1949, 'Fuel Famine in South Wexford', 11;

The Cork Examiner, 19.5.1947, 'Another Petrol Famine', 4; Irish Independent 29.12.1945, 'Farmer Predicts Cattle Famine', 5; Irish Press 4.7.1945, 'Europe Faces Coal Famine Next Winter', 3; Irish Press 18.8.1948, 'Famine in Cigarettes', 1; Connacht Sentinel 15.4.1947, 'Have the Irish Homeland?', 1; Irish Independent 22.1.1947, '1847-1947'.

[642] Tuam Herald 15.2.1947, 22.2.1947, 1.3.1947, 8.3.1947, 15.3.1947, 5.4.1947. The same play was also staged by professional groups during this period, at least in Dublin and Cork. Mark-Fitzgerald 2013, 59.

[643] Tuam Herald 7.6.1947; Tuam Herald 25.10.1947; 13.12.1947; Tuam Herald 20.12.1947.

5.6 IN CONCLUSION

It is a sign of the lasting legacy of the nationalist narrative that both Michael Davitt's *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland* (1904) and John Mitchel's *Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)* were on the list of recommended readings in the National schools' *Notes for teachers* from 1933 and 1959.[644] This list was meant to guide future National school teachers in the proper content of Irish history. One could assume that at least by 1959 the major academic scholarly work on the Famine, *The Great Famine 1845-52* edited by R. Dudley Edwards and T. Desmond Williams,[645] would have made the list, but it did not. In fact, most of the works listed suggested a highly 'nationalist' reading for teachers, including Mitchel's and Davitt's works. Apparently, the state schools did not prioritize the inclusion of the latest academic research when it came to Irish history and the Famine.

In a rough period of about one-hundred years, the number of major Irish historical works with an explicit focus on the Famine amounted to four (i.e. Trevelyan's Irish Crisis, Mitchel's The Last Conquest of Ireland, O'Rourke's The History of the Great Irish Famine, and Edwards and William's The Great Famine, which was the first attempt by a group of professional Irish historians). Of course, there were other biographical studies, and works in historical subfields (such as economic history and agricultural history), and especially local history studies, that also appeared during this period and covered aspects of the Famine. Liam O'Flaherty's best-selling novel Famine was probably one of the most influential books shaping the public perception of, and above all interest in, the topic of the Famine.646 The uproar that Cecil Woodham-Smith's The Great Hunger (1962) caused amongst Irish historians is in many ways an interesting development, not least because it accentuated or introduced the broader Irish historiographical revisionist vs. nationalist debate into the narrower field of Irish famine studies. Woodham-Smith's book, still popular and a bestseller up to this day, forced academic historians to position and articulate themselves more clearly in the eye of the public. And that debate continues up to this day.

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[644] An Roinn Oideachais, *Notes for Teachers,* 1933, 30; An Roinin Oideachais, *Notes for Teachers,* 1959, 28.

[645] Edwards and Williams 1956. For a historiographical survey on the creation of this work see Ó Gráda 2006, 234-250.

[646] Evans 2018.

6 EPILOGUE: A COMMENTARY ON FAMINE MEMORIALS IN FINLAND

In 2006, the Swedish and Finnish Lutheran congregations in Vaasa decided to equally share the costs of establishing a famine memorial for the unknown victims that lay buried in a mass burial on Kappelimäki. Two years later, the wooden cross memorial was erected by the Ostrobothnian Historical Society.[647] By this time, famine memorials had become widespread in the rural areas of Ostrobothnia. Andrew Newby had found 74 memorials dedicated to the 1860s famine by 2017, and more are constantly being discovered, raised, or planned.[648]

The distribution of these memorials roughly corresponds to the regions that suffered from high famine mortality, and up to 70 per cent of them are situated in churchyards and/or next to a locally known mass burial sites.[649] Many of those located outside of churchyards can be difficult to find for an outsider, as public information about them is scarce. Also, the locations are rarely designed for the convenience of the 21st century tourist. In contrast to Ireland, there is no national famine memorial in Finland. All the known memorials reflect a local, or at most regional, commemorative culture.

The most intriguing part of the Vaasa memorial was not the real events during the famine, nor the inauguration ceremony in 2008, but the fact that when the mass grave was discovered during a road construction project in the 1950s it did not trigger a public investigation into the origin of the mass grave, or commemorative efforts to honour those who lay buried there. Meanwhile, many other localities in rural Finland were slowly starting to address the famine "memory" by erecting, or planning to erect, their own memorials in conjunction with the famine's upcoming centenary. The majority of the Finnish famine memorials are from the "long" famine -centenary period, the 1950 to the 1970s, with the culmination in late 1960s.[650]

From a mnemohistorical perspective, the general timing of these commemorative projects is hardly surprising, taking into account the fact that the witnesses of the famine were almost all dead, and in order to preserve the physical landmarks of the famine informative memorials were needed. This corresponds to the commemorative wave in 1940s Ireland. Therefore, one could imagine that the accidental discovery of a burial pit in Vaasa would have triggered a local effort for a commemorative project in accordance with the general commemorative trend in the country, and in line with a somewhat

[647] Pohjalainen 18.8.2006: https://www.pohjalainen.fi/nalkavuosien-uhrien-unohdetulle-joukkohaudalle-muistomerkki-1.938653 (last visited 20.5.2019).

[648] Newby 2017a.

[649] Newby 2017a.

[650] Newby 2017a, 180.

similar discovery in Tuam in 1947, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, the mnemohistory in Vaasa diverged from the trend in the rest of country. This short epilogue cannot give a full and exact account of why it took more than fifty years before a famine memorial was inaugurated in Vaasa, which would require deeper micro-contextual and archival research, but it will present some important contextual background as to how we may approach famine commemoration in the Finnish context.

6.1 FAMINE MEMORIALS IN FINLAND[651]

According to the Cambridge online dictionary a memorial is 'an object, often large and made of stone that has been built to honour a famous person or event'.[652] This definition is quite straightforward. A memorial has to be an object, and, additionally, it has to verbalize the intended meaning of the object, often through some kind of plaque or a board with an inscription attached to the object. Without this latter criteria an object could only be regarded as a memorial to persons that have an internalized memory connected to that object.

If we take this definition as a starting point then, for example, the stone fence that surrounds Kiikoinen churchyard (built as a famine relief project in 1867-68) could not have been regarded as a memorial until the date 6th of December 2018, when its memorial plaque was unveiled and it was consequently transformed into a recognizable and explicit famine memorial.[653] However, knowledge of the fence as a distinguishable artefact from the famine period must have survived somewhere, either in the parish archives and/or in local oral tradition, prior to the plaque bring it to the public's knowledge. Those people who had an awareness of the fence's origin must have been concerned about the slow eradication of that particular awareness. They must have considered the fence an important part of their heritage, and believed that it was important to educate new community members, either children or new residents of the locality, by means of their commemorative project. Those who are aware of an object's origin do not need reminders. Or, as the case of the discovery of the mass grave in Vaasa in the 1950s illustrates: they do not necessarily want to be reminded, for whatever

[651] Andrew Newby's blog 'Finland's "Great Hunger Years" memorials' has been especially useful when trying to visit famine memorials. Undoubtedly, too, some of my insights explored in this chapter have been influenced either through personal correspondence with Newby, or by studying his blog.

[652] Cambridge Dictionary, entry on 'memorial': https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/memorial (last visited 20.5.2019).

[653] Tyrvään Sanomat 10.12.2018: https://www.tyrvaansanomat.fi/a/201349658 (last visited 20.5.2019).

reasons they may have. Therefore, we should acknowledge that the function of a memorial is related to an attempt at shaping identities, in this instance a local identity.[654]

The chronology of famine memorials can be roughly categorized into two groups: memorials of contemporary origin and memorials of later generations. Those belonging to the first category are not always easily recognizable, and many memorials of this type have been forgotten, while some others can be mistakenly interpreted as referencing the famine even though they may have originally had some other intended meaning, such as the rock engraving "1867" right next to an old boat shelter on Nuottakallio in Hamina. The simple engraving is reportedly a testament to the bay having been covered in ice in the midsummer of 1867,[655] but the creator's original meaning cannot be ascertained from a lone four-digit number. Another aspect to consider is that even if the engraving had been made in commemoration of someone who died that year, what basis do we have to assume that the person was a famine victim, or that the engraving was a famine memorial? We do not consider everyone who died in the years 1865 to 1868 to be victims of famine, or every artefact produced then to be a famine object. If we did, then as a matter of consistency we should classify every upper class family tombstone as a famine memorial; but we do not for obvious reasons. A memorial should speak to a collective audience, while a private grave speaks only to those for whom the buried person had meaning.

Consequently, memorials of a contemporary origin often fall short in clearly articulating the intended purpose of the memorial object. From the perspective of mnemohistory this is understandable, because persons who have internalized a meaningful memory or relation into an object do not require an articulation of its meaning. Inscriptions are aimed at the uninformed, not the ones who already know or remember the event.[656]

In Parkano cemetery, the parish with the highest mortality in the whole Grand Duchy in 1868, an obscure, small, gravestone-shaped red granite stone with the engraving of a cross and the number 1868 lays somewhat misplaced in the cemetery, hidden between rose bushes and a garbage bin. The origin of this stone is unknown, but it seems plausible to assume that it was intended as a gravestone; after all, it is located in the cemetery and it bears an engraving of a cross. In addition, the number 1868 points towards the worst humanitarian crisis ever recorded in Parkano's local history. All things considered, it is reasonable to assume that it was intended to commemorate

[654] Here it is important to keep in mind that local identity and national identity need not exclude one another in the form of a polarized counter-narrative against a hegemonic narrative. That can sometimes be the case, but as a general trend in Finland local identities are often submerged into or layered with a national hegemonic narrative. Newby 2017a, 178.

[655] Newby, *Finland's "Great Hunger Years" memorials*, 'Hamina (Salmi)': https://katovuodet1860.wordpress.com/tag/nalkaajat/ (last visited 24.5.2019).

[656] See also the discussion of Newby and Kraatari 2018.

the collective famine victims of the year 1868, because had it been a personal grave then it would certainly include that person's name, according to the custom among the upper classes even then. Furthermore, we may assume that Parkano must have had its own mass grave somewhere, perhaps inside the current cemetery but now forgotten, where the several hundred poor victims would have been buried together. Consequently, it seems likely that this stone was erected as a collective memorial on that site sometime after the famine. However, its current location, neglected and probably somewhat misplaced,[657] squeezed between more modern gravestones, reminds us of the natural evolution of mnemohistory: old and forgotten graves that no one ever visits are quickly taken into new use if there is demand for that space, and when this happens the interpretation of what used to be a commemorative object becomes blurred, forgotten, and more of an obstacle to present needs.

Figure 4 Famine memorial in Parkano. Photo by Henrik Forsberg

Memorials of later origin, the majority of them inaugurated between the 1950s and 1970s, are often found somewhere in churchyards. These locations

[657] See also Newby's blog entry Newby, *Finland's "Great Hunger Years" memorials,* 'Parkano' https://katovuodet1860.wordpress.com/2018/07/24/parkano/ (last visited 24.5.2019).

are a natural place to commemorate the dead, although it is not known if or how many famine victims really lay buried in these vicinities. The memorial stone in Veteli, inaugurated in 1954 and located behind the church, is a rarity in its explicit statement: '1866-1867. Victims of the Hunger Years lie here in Veteli's consecrated earth.'[658] However, it does not say how many victims lie there, and we can be sure that many who migrated found their graves elsewhere. The memorial in Lavia is more exact, with the extraordinary inscription: 'In this garden of God lie approximately 800 Lavia residents, who during the sore trials of the Hunger Years died without leaving their home parish. Centenary Memorial Erected by Grateful Lavia Residents, 1967'. But, in general, the majority of famine commemorations located within churchyards do not make such exact claims. Instead, they focus on honouring the memory of the event and its victims, no matter where the famine victims lay buried, often adding a biblical quotation.

However, many memorials combine these chronological levels; for example, the memorial at Kiikoinen, with its modern plaque inscription that comments on the origin of the physical landmark created during the famine. Most of the memorials attached to gravesites and/or relief projects built during the famine have this double-layered chronology: the object itself as a relic, and an additional informational memorial. Other examples are numerous: Tokerotie (regional road 672) in Jalasjärvi; Vääksy channel in Asikkala; the Riihimäki- St. Petersburg railway sites in Hausjärvi, Kärkölä, Lahti and Nastola, etc.

6.2 HISTORICAL ERRORS OR JUST LOCAL INTERPRETATION?

It is not easy to distinguish pure historical errors from a localized and historically justifiable interpretation. Chronologies differ in the memorials, which is unsurprising taking into account the different circumstances from one parish to another during the famine period, but it is more perplexing when this occurs within one parish. The Hausjärvi memorial in Oitti, supposedly of contemporary origin and dedicated to the railway builders who died there, is interesting in that its inscription includes the year 1867, while the actual building of the track did not begin until the Spring of 1868, which raises a question about the timing of the engraving of the gravestone. Another memorial in Hausjärvi (Hikiä), dedicated for the local inhabitants, interprets the famine as 'The Years of Poverty, 1862-1868'. The official history of Hausjärvi, by Oiva Keskitalo, published in 1964 recognizes 1867 as the severest crop failure and 1868 as the peak of the mortality crisis.[659] On the other hand, Keskitalo did not believe that anyone in Hausjärvi died from starvation, but

[658] Newby 2017a, 208.

[659] Keskitalo 1964, 604.

only from epidemics spread by incoming workers and beggars, despite the extraordinary harvest failure that he nonetheless accredits to the famine story.[660]

Consequently, for a modern famine scholar the case of Hausjärvi presents a number of typical famine problems: i) chronology shifts according to which famine victims are in focus; ii) death from starvation is a social stigma, hence the interpretation that local residents died from disease and poverty and not from hunger, while the death of outsiders is more directly linked to the crop failure of 1867; iii) "outsiders" brought diseases and overburdened "our" supplies.

It is important that we not only consider chronological issues regarding commemorations in stone, but also the agents of the commemoration, and with a broader definition of what meanings may be inscribed on memorials. Stone monuments are only one way of commemorating the past. Literature, both of fact and fiction, is another effective means, as discussed in article II and by others,[661] which can provide a wider indication of the ideological connotations that underpin commemorative efforts. Finnish print capitalism after the famine may have been smaller in scale than in Ireland, however the famine or famine-inspired themes still had a lasting influence on the Finnish literary tradition. Many Finnish literary classics would look very different had there not been a famine. On the other hand, the famine stories found in contemporary poems processed grief and loss, while broadside ballads often moralized the causes of the famine in terms of divine displeasure, and were fond of retelling the story of the criminal Hallin Janne.[662]

In the research literature it has been suggested that the famine constituted an important motif within the worker's movement [see also article II and III].[663] This link is less obvious in the latter part of the nineteenth century, mainly because of three reasons. Primarily, the pressure created by the presence of the famine generation, who did not associate political ideologies with their own recollection of the events; secondly, by the fact that the workers movement did not mobilize itself into trading unions and as a political party until around the turn of the century,[664] thus creating a significant time lag between the famine and the movement's founding event; and thirdly, the bourgeoisie and the Fennoman parties were not against learning lessons from the famine, and thus the public memory of it was not and could not be capitalized as the property of one party alone.

The tumultuous years of increasing confrontational politics in the second half of the 1910s changed this.[665] Article II discusses some of the historical and

[660] Keskitalo 1964, 601–602, 605.

[661] E.g. Häkkinen 1991b; Jussila 2018; Forsberg 2011.

[662] Jussila 2018, 240–246.

[663] Häkkinen 1991b; Häkkinen 1990.

[664] Haapala 1999.

[665] Ehrnrooth 1992; Siltala 2009.

literary representations around the time of the Civil War. Elsewhere, Antti Häkkinen has shown how from the early 1890s onward the experience of hunger and /or the memory of the 1860s famine could trigger political activism, i.e. make one 'Red'.[666]

I would like to add that so far as the Civil War can be viewed as a long-term reaction to the famine, the Civil War itself cast its own shadow on how the 1860s famine would be interpreted and publicly utilized. After the war, the bourgeoisie Whites felt that the Socialist uprising manifested the inherent dangers of politicizing rhetoric on hunger, starvation, and social control. In the interwar period, speaking about famine could be interpreted as a veiled social commentary on the root causes of the Socialist uprising, unless another famine context was clearly articulated, such as the famine of 1695-97. After the Civil War the folk school textbook and other popular histories, such as Aarno Karimo's *Kumpujen yöstä*,[667] had no difficulty in incorporating the 1695-97 famine into their national histories, but were dead-silent about the famine of the 1860s, as if it never had happened [see also article IV].

If we examine what theatres performed Karl A. Tavaststjerna's famine play *Uramon torppa,* we can identify a similar pattern. This play was based upon Tavaststjerna's famine novel *Hårda tider* (1891), which his friend Juhani Aho translated into Finnish (1892) and which subsequently was turned into a play called *Uramon torppa*. Tavaststjerna's original novel *Hårda tider* had given rise to some public controversy, and inspired politicians and historians to correct his supposedly false narration of the hunger years [more on this in article II]. However, in the 1890s his play *Uramon torppa* was performed by the Finnish theatre around the country, with far less political baggage and political controversy than his novel, and in general gaining positive reviews.[668] In the 1910s, performances of Tavaststjerna's play were increasingly being performed by worker's theatre associations, and after the Civil War only worker's theatre associations performed the play, with only worker's newspapers reporting about the performances.[669]

Only one non-political theatre group, Joensuun näytelmäseura, dared to take the risk of adding the play to their repertoire in the Fall of 1919. The regional newspaper Suur-Karjala, did not expect it to achieve much success, citing the recent war and its brutalities being too fresh in people's memories, and wished for something jollier.[670] There was a full crowd for the premier, but

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[666] Häkkinen 1990, 427–437; see also Häkkinen 1987.

[667] Karimo 1929–1932.

[668] Hufvudstadsbladet 11.11.1892; Päivälehti 10.11.1892; Uusi Suometar 10.11.1892; Aura 12.11.1892; Karjalatar 25.11.1892.

[669] National Library of Finland Digital Collections on the search entry "Uramon torppa": https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/search?query=uramon%20torppa&formats=NEWSPAPER&resultMode=CHART (last viewed 22.5.2019).

[670] Suur-Karjala 28.8.1919, "Niitä ja näitä.", 3.

the rest of the performances attracted virtually no audience at all.[671] Meanwhile, *Tampereen Kansan Teatteri* (Tampere People's Theater) performed it in 1920,[672] *Nummenmäen Työväen Näyttämö* (Nummenmäki Workers' Stage) performed it in 1924, [673] and during the 60th anniversary of the famine the play was staged by several theatres, including at least *Enson työväennäyttämö* (Enso Workers stage), *Karhulan Sos.-dem. Työläisnuorisoosaston Näytelmäseura* (Karhula's Socialdemocratic worker's youth section drama association) and *Sorvalin Työväen Näyttämö* (Sorvali Worker's stage).[674]

The Könöpelto memorial in Varkaus[675] is remarkable for two unrelated reasons. The first is that it materialized as early as it did,[676] probably owing to the strong and influential position held by the Social Democratic party in the local governing bodies in the 1930s. At the inauguration of the memorial in 1936 the town's own Member of Parliament and SDP politician Onni Hiltunen was present. The second reason is that memorial itself includes somewhat questionable information. It is dedicated to the Taipale channel workers (built in 1867 to 1871), on a mass grave site in a forest nearby the channel. The square-shaped pyramid informs the viewer that there lie 281 victims from 51 different parishes. When I walked around the fenced area and saw the depth and width of the collapsed pits, it made me doubt the reported number of bodies. Indeed, based on other sources it seems likely that the mass graves contained the remains of 400 to 800 individuals.[677] The figure of 281 engraved on the memorial refers to those who were buried mainly in April and May 1868,[678] but we may safely assume that burials continued even after this, throughout 1868 and possibly even as long as the construction of the channel was ongoing.

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[671] Suur-Karjala 9.9.1919, "Joensuun Teatterin avajaisjuhla", 2; Suur-Karjala 20.9.1919, "Joensuun näytelmäseura", 2.

[672] Kangasalan Sanomat 27.11.1920.

[673] Sosialisti 4.4.1924.

[674] Työväenjärjestöjen Tiedonantaja 27.1.1927; Etelä-Suomi 21.4.1927; Työ 14.11.1929.

[675] See Newby 2017a, 207-208.

[676] It was one of the earlier famine memorials in Finland, but not the first one (if we exclude contemporary memorials); at least the Hämeenkyrö memorial preceded it.

[677] One writer claimed that a thousand people were buried on the hill. See Vapaus 18.12.1925, "Pakina Warkaudesta", 6. Compare that to Hannu Soikkanen's assessment that 281 people were buried in April and May 1868. Soikkanen 1963, 204-210. The plausible figure probably lies somewhere between those minimum and maximum estimates.

[678] Soikkanen 1963, 208.

Figure 5 Famine memorial at Könönpelto in Varkaus. Photo by Henrik Forsberg

The real upsurge in famine commemorations occurred at the end of the mnemohistorical period, in the 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s. Newby and Kraatari have linked this to a change in commemorative practices centred around the monuments dedicated to the victims of the Winter War and the Continuation War.[679] Indeed, it is true that visiting any churchyard one is first struck by the commemorations in honour of either the Civil War White's sacrifices, or the fallen soldiers from the Second World War. Compared to the vast number of these monuments, the famine commemorations seem small and almost insignificant. However, that interpretation is peculiar to the Finnish context, while a broader mnemohistorical and comparative perspective would pay attention to the fact that most famine victims throughout world history do not have any commemoration at all. Rarely do famines give cause for commemoration, but the insight that the Irish and Finnish famines began to be commemorated with large numbers of stone monuments after approximately a hundred to a hundred-and-fifty years had passed is also interesting when considering what we may expect from the commemoration practices for 20th century famines.

In my view the generational distance seems more significant, in that it allowed more room for contemplation on a past that was less personal and

[679] Newby and Kraatari 2018, 103-104.

intimately remembered. In addition, in Finland the war experiences had also strengthened the sense of national cohesion, or at least made it appear less vulnerable, which made it easier to imagine that a peaceful co-existence between social classes during a famine had been possible in the first place. In this way, the post-war era saw a revitalization of the Topelian and Fennoman ideal that had briefly been crushed by the Civil War. This aspect had local mnemohistorical contours, and I suspect that in Vaasa, being politically an ideological stronghold of the White's 1918 War of Liberation, the public atmosphere in the 1950s was less open to addressing fatal social injustices than had been the case in Varkaus in the 1930s. After all, to discover a mass grave in the 1950s could and probably did lead to thoughts of the atrocities of 1918, in spite of what the real origin of the grave had been. On the other hand, for most rural municipalities where these commemorations sprung up during the famine centenary, it was not about any kind of "new" discovery, but rather a commemorative process that articulated something that was already known, although fading in oral tradition.

7 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Famine is an elusive concept. It deflects attempts to define it with precision, clarity, and rigor. It is widely used in popular discourse and most of us think we know what it means, and if we are not 100% sure, then we can easily look it up in a dictionary. Yet, a clear and precise understanding for oneself does not mean that others share that specific definition. This becomes evident when choosing a name for a social, economic, and political crisis, no matter whether it unfolds right before our eyes or somewhere in the past. Defining a situation as a famine demands or assumes certain courses of action in response, whereas claiming the same situation stems from a civil war or a mere depression points toward other responses. A recollection that no one died from starvation, but only from diseases or bad food, functions not only as a moral excuse of shared culpability but also as an attempt to naively draw a thin red line between causal relations that are highly interwoven. This thesis has made a strong case that in order to understand what famine actually is, with all of its complexities and its many shades of grey, we must always include an assessment of the different agents, their experiences, and why they define or contest the definitions the way they do.

The research questions that I presented in the beginning of this thesis were:

I) Can we study the afterlife of famines without falling into the trap of unwanted methodological nationalism, and simultaneously be respectful towards both famine memories and histories? How?

II) Are there any observable implications that historical change has on mnemohistorical processes? Are there any observable implications that mnemohistory has on historical change? In Finland? In Ireland? In general?

III) For future research, what new research problems has this thesis given rise to?

Below, I will review each article's main contribution to this research.

The main contribution of article I is that the causes of the Finnish famine of the 1860s, which resulted in an extreme mortality crisis in 1868, cannot be narrowed down to a single factor. The choice of the temporal scope is highly relevant, and it shapes what kind of political significance we attribute to structural issues such as socioeconomic vulnerability, environmental issues, and long-term policies as compared to more reactive policies. The famine had multiple causes, and there remains much work for scholars trying to understand how and why it locally manifested as it did. This is not a surprising conclusion in an international and comparative framework for famine studies, but it contrasts with mainstream Finnish national historiography, and with the propensity to prefer sequential historical narratives and explanations. Moreover, it contrasts sharply popular representations of the famine, as for example in state-sanctioned national history textbooks, as presented in article

IV, or a broader segment of cultural artefacts and memorials, as in article II and chapter six.

The main finding from article II is that the Finnish famine provided a significant source of inspiration for the emerging national literature from 1868 to 1920. Much of the canonical Finnish literary works that nowadays would be called the country's literary classics would look quite different, or would not exist at all, had there not been a famine that provided the authors with a socially significant event to work with. An additional finding is that the literature was heavily gendered towards promoting a nationally, politically, and socially submissive masculine role-model, but not feminine. The masculine role-model was not necessarily something peculiar for a famine story in itself, but was embedded in the narrative traditions found in Finland in that period. The importance of this second finding is notable when it is contrasted with other international cases, mainly Margaret Kelleher's feminization of famine thesis on the Irish and Indian famines, but also Edgerton-Tarpley's study of the feminization of nationalism with regards to the Shanxi famine in the 1870s. We can identify a gender element in Finnish famine representations, but not feminization.

This raises many intriguing follow-up questions. One is the consideration of for whom the representation was intended, and for what purpose? In the Finnish case, the masculine role-model was directed towards domestic readers. Had the representations been directed toward some other audience, the emphasis would probably have been different. Based on this finding, one could argue that the feminization of famine seems to be interlinked to colonial or post-colonial discourses and an asymmetrical power relation defining social identities more than hitherto has been recognized; this is definitely the case for modern-day famine representations and Kelleher's study on the Irish and Bengal famine representations, because Finland's potential colonial history has never been seriously assessed, and therefore the feminization of famine in Finland has had less currency for public narratives. Following from this perspective, scholars inclined to interpret the feminization of famine should perhaps look for its roots as an element of colonial discourse in their case-country's history. Other interesting questions arising from this include: when, in Finland, did famines start to be represented in a feminized manner? And to what extent does it matter that it is 'other's' famines that are represented in this way, and not 'ours'?

When considering the build-up towards conflict in 1918, the mnemohistorical role of the famine that occurred fifty years earlier is intriguing. Based on the literary evidence as shown in this article, it is clear that the people living in the 1910s had not forgotten the famine. This is also supported by the folklore testimonies from that period. The thought of the famine of 1867-68 must have mentally and emotionally resonated with that generation in a way that is hard to imagine for us today. It seems plausible to suggest that some of the popular support for the Socialist uprising in 1917 may have been linked to the fear of 1868 repeating itself. And, on the other hand,

the Whites' harsh retaliation against the Reds through executions and starvation in prison camps can also be understood as a reaction to the workers 'unmanly' strikes in 1917, their rebellion and unwillingness to die through noble starvation in the manner their forefathers had done. Even so, by reviewing Figure 1 in this thesis we are also reminded that a clear majority of the population, 79 to 87 per cent, did not have a personal memory of the famine. In other words, whatever the link between the famine and the Civil War, it was neither linear nor causal, but more of a cultural legacy, a fusion of mnemotic and historical interpretations, like the example of Lady Gregory in Ireland in chapter five, that shaped mentalities and expectations within which the specific historical context contributed to an escalation of confrontational politics.

The main contribution of article III is that the sequencing and relief measures of the Irish Famine and the Finnish famine were similar. Based on international famine studies and a historical study of mid-nineteenth century European social and political history, this is what we would expect find. The historical contexts and the potential sources are much more similar than, for instance, comparing the 1860s famine with the Great European famine of 1315. Yet, the greater importance of this is for a general overview of the European history of famines in the nineteenth century. Basically, these famines in Ireland and Finland, under two European and global imperial powers, are a sign of their European similarities more than their national differences.

Having said that, it does not mean that this article comes without implications for the respective national histories as well. The main result concerning Finland is that the role of food exports has been overlooked in previous scholarship, that its absolute quantities were significant in terms of the food shortage in the years 1867 and 1868, and that there remains much potential for future research in assessing food availability, trade, and markets on the local, regional, and transnational levels. Despite some macro-studies on price fluctuations during the famine,[680] we know surprisingly little about the operations of food markets on a micro-level: where and when did some people have access to food, and for how long, and who were they? In terms of implications for Irish historiography, the contrasting lesson is that the role of food exports has been exaggerated, resulting in a negligence towards the study of imports and their localized market operations. Ireland's grain supply and food trade are seldom contextualized as a part of the British market economy and its dynamics, or market mechanisms in general. Why did some potato-dependant Irish localities suffer less than their likewise potato-dependant neighbours? How can we apply the notion of the social capital of groups to this situation: was it due to better credit rates, better access to imports, better transnational networks and contacts, relief works, social hierarchy, local wealth? Who imported, how much, where to, and what kind of effect did it

[680] Ó Gráda 2005; Pitkänen 1993.

have locally? What is needed is an increasing focus, micro-historical if you will, on the interplay between the local and transnational, something that has been overlooked by research framed according to current national borders and economies.

The main contribution of article IV is the chronological establishment of national history textbooks used in Finland's folk schools from the 1870s to the 1940s. This was a pioneering exercise to define those textbooks that were significant to a particular generation. No one has ever attempted to argue which textbooks from a particular period were the most widely read, or at least not within such a long time period as I have. The selection criteria for the textbooks used in this type of research is seldomly justified empirically, which in terms of mnemohistorical progression on any topic, not just famines, should be an obvious point for concern. Thus, through this article I wanted to provide a textbook-baseline for how we can incorporate state-sanctioned official histories into mnemohistory. Potentially, in future research this textbook-baseline can contribute to other textbook research on different topics as well; at least it is a starting point.

Furthermore, there were several other findings from article IV. Primarily, that famine as a topic was not a taboo in folk school histories, as evidenced by the repetition of the late 17th century famine in every textbook throughout the study period, and the extensive portrayal of famine-related themes in the Topelius textbook. Secondly, and in contrast to the previous point, the 1860s famine was diminished to the status of a footnote, a secondary remark made only for the purpose of arguing some other point, or was non-existent all together. Its place in the Finnish language textbook narratives decreased over time, and in the latter textbooks of the 1930s it was absent. In contrast, the Swedish folk school textbook of the 1930s, authored by Ottelin, reincorporated the event. If framed only as a textbook study, this would seem like a minor development (one Swedish textbook in comparison to all the examined textbooks over a 70 year period). Thirdly, in terms of the mnemohistory of different language groups, there is much room for discussion and research in the future. This is not the only time in Finnish history that certain issues in the public sphere could be voiced more freely in Swedish than in Finnish, as for example the case of censoring the Finnish translation of K.A. Tavaststjerna's novel [article II], or Swedish-speaking historian Schybergson's slant against Snellman's relief measures.[681] Consequently, critical studies on the Swedish (in Finland) experience and the mnemohistory of the Famine could and should be done in the future. It seems reasonable to argue, based on what we know now from the actual famine context, and based on studying the project of building and upholding a dominantly Finnish nation-state, to which the state-sanctioned history education in folk schools was committed, that the 1860s famine was politically more problematic for the nation-state's legitimacy than the 1690s famine had been. And moreover, that this concerned the Finnish

[681] Forsberg 2011, 271-274.

linguistic group more than the Swedish minority. The follow-up question is, why that was the case? Can we provide more context and more evidence for this statement? And the counter-question is that, if that truly were the case, then why do we not see more memorials dedicated to the 1690s famine?[682]

Mnemohistorically, we can postulate a preliminary hypothesis left to be scrutinized by future research. When the majority of the population could still remember the famine, it could not be omitted from a historical narrative that stretched into the contemporary period. For the later generation of pupils, however, the explicit story of the famine of 1867-68 would have been more historical, more abstract and less personal, and as the nation-state emphasized other significant events in national history, this event lost its utility as a symbol of a shared national experience. In another country, in another context, a similar mnemohistorical story could have taken a different trajectory, and Ireland is an example of that. In Finland, on the contrary, it became dangerously politicized. The rise of an increasingly self-aware and agitated working class in the first decade of the twentieth century, the contemporary political events of 1918, and the Great Depression of the 1930s, all of which actualized tropes such as hunger, unemployment, relief schemes, and forced starvation into evocative political fighting-words, made the public memory of mass starvation a potential threat to the idea of national cohesion and solidarity. In this sense, it seems reasonable for the agents of the nation-state to promote a narrative that could depoliticize these issues as much as possible. Hence, a projection, or even a conscious conflation of the notion of "hunger years" that directed those thoughts towards the 1690s famine and not the more recent ones would have been preferable, especially in those arenas where the nation-state held a monopoly on the narrative and communication for a whole generation, i.e. the folk school system's textbooks.

One insight gained from article V, focusing on the portrayal of Irish Famine in Irish schools, is that it forms an interesting asymmetrical parallel to the Finnish case, as further explored in chapter five. The Irish Famine appeared in Irish history textbooks 30 to 50 years after the event. This can be partially explained by the very different political, educational, and institutional contexts, and partially in terms of mnemohistorical progression. As in Finland,

[682] Local commemorative activity, on the other hand, has a different purpose than state commemoration and narratives. We should not mix the two, even if their narratives in many cases share some similarities. If we would do a study on the mnemohistory of the seventeenth century famine, one of the first observations would be that its local memorial boom should have taken place around the 1790s, or perhaps a little earlier because of the shorter life expectancy back then. Yet, in the eighteenth century the local burial and commemorative culture were different, and the societies were much less literate, pointing towards the need for folklore sources shedding light on the topic, which are scarce. At the time of the 1860s famine, long past its mnemohistorical period, it was mainly the educated classes, and specifically the historically well read, that could draw parallels between the two famines. On a local level, however, it may have suffered from the lack of a popular familiarity, and was therefore reduced to a distant and abstract historical past.

the interest in the Famine as a national historical event was activated around 25 to 30 years after the event, and then slightly waned c. 50 years after. This is the timeframe when the bulk of the literature was published, when the event was debated in public, and in Finland when the folklore was collected. (The Irish folklore collection began 90 years after the Famine.) In terms of life-course cycles, this is the period when the famine children had become adults, and were conscious of possessing memories of an extraordinary event that the younger generations did not have.

Yet, the most important finding from article V is the realization that the idea of Irish nationality, nowadays associated with the narrative of a unique history with the Famine as its most symbolic event, and as significantly distinct from neighbouring national identities, did not emerge in the textbooks used in the educational domain until the turn of the century. In the educational domain, the nationalist narrative was first incorporated into the National schools, and only later into the supposedly nationalistic education system, the Christian Brothers' textbooks. This is a new interpretation, and contrary to the dominant interpretation found in Irish educational historiography, where children's Irish national identity has often been portrayed as unhistorical and fixed until the English sought to change it through the national school system. Thus, there is more fluidity to the concept of nationality and the emphasis on certain educational idealogies in the nineteenth century Irish educational domain than has hitherto been acknowledged.

This calls for more studies on the content and ideology of Christian Brothers' teaching prior to 1900, and more studies on the appropriation of the nationalistic (Mitchelite) narrative of the Famine into other social domains. Phrased as a research question for a future research proposal, we may ask: when did Catholic Ireland become nationalistic, and which were the institutions and who were the agents of this transformation? Based upon this article, it is now evident that nationality and its teaching in Ireland has a more complex history to tell.

In order to answer research question I) we can conclude that yes, it is possible, but that it comes with some caveats, which have been discussed in chapters two, three, and four. To summarise my argument from these: first, we must be clear that we understand the political complexities embedded in the famine context that infiltrate and frame the interpretations made of it before, during, and after the famine. Famines, often superficially categorized as either man-made or naturally caused, should be problematized as complex emergencies. A familiarity with other famines, i.e. an underlying comparative perspective, is of great help in differentiating contextual variations from universal phenomenological features. This is of paramount importance, as otherwise there is a high risk of the scholar involuntarily perpetuating a biased narrative related to some strand of identity politics, often some particular form of nationalistic ideologies, that may or may not have currency today.

Secondly, we must be aware on the nature of the methodological nationalism that is inherently involved in a research project. This involves an assessment of our own methodological choices, as well as an assessment of the framework, scale, and perspectives used, or any methodological shortcomings of the sources we use. We cannot exclude sources purely on the basis that they are biased in one way or the other. The fact is that every source is biased. Therefore, we must recognize the narrative that they represent and analyse it precisely as what it is: a representation. Being able to think about the past as a labyrinth of perspectives and narratives, and accepting its chaotic form, is helpful.

Thirdly, we must recognize the difference between the individual who can remember, the individual who cannot remember, the individual who writes history for others to remember, and all the other metaphorical memory noises. When researching a narrative about the famine during the mnemohistorical period, it is vital to pay attention to how words like memory and history are used: are they synonymous, symmetrical, or diametrically opposed in the source? How does the use change within the same source, or how is it interpreted in different eras? In other words, there are a multitude of memory layers, some of which are even deliberate attempts to rewrite and invent identities of in the past for future purposes. As discussed in chapters three and four, and exemplified in chapter five and articles II, IV, and V, political identities are formed and shaped in discursive practices, and the scholar must be cautious not to be persuaded by the sources and project an identity by mistake. The historian must acquire a sense of control, some way to systemize this politically inflated memory and identity dilemma that is embedded in the nature of famines, as well as their afterlives.

I resolved this problem by asking who can remember the famines, and came up with the quite rudimentary solution of population tables informing me on the size of each age cohort at a particular moment. I thus created an overview of mnemohistorical progression on a national level. That was a conscious choice of methodological nationalism. One could undoubtedly go much further and deeper, for example by adding a spatial scale or even a biographical level, but for this thesis this level seemed adequate, comparable, and interesting enough. It gave me the perspective to see historical change in a society from the point of view of those who had lived during the famine, but in contrast to ordinary oral history testimonies this was not on a subjective level, but a generational one. It made me ponder what kind of influence a certain age cohort in society may have had at any given time? And do certain generational experiences of that cohort manifest in some historical changes? As I began to think about mnemohistory in this manner, some historical changes and context seemed easier to grasp. It provided a macrolevel context to microlevel incidents. On the broad scale, there was the first wave of famine literature and memories, often appearing around 20 to 30 years after the event, then the demand for collecting folklore testimonies before it was too late, and the final commemoration boom at the centenaries.

Most importantly, this approach, which I decided to call mnemohistory and defined as the period of co-existence of those who can remember and those who cannot, seemed like *the* approach that forces a scholar to ask the epistemologically key question when reading a source: is this narration based upon memory, history, or both, and to what kind of identity project is it linked? This is something that scholars within the broad field of collective memory studies sometimes forget to ask. In addition, the balanced and neutral emphasis on both mnemo (memory) and history sensitizes the scholar to regard these categories not as oppositional to each other, but as a complimentary process in time. The interesting aspect for me is where and when memory and history intersect, or perhaps even clash, on a societal level. No other approach than mnemohistory is as focused, sufficiently flexible, and determined to deliver on this aspect.

In order to answer my research question II) on the observable implications that mnemohistorical processes has on historical change, and vice versa, this research has only succeeded in pointing out certain issues we need to study in more detail. On a very general level it is obvious that any age-groupdiminishes in size as it grows older, and eventually disappears. It is also a universal process. Only the absolute size and proportional size of the entire population, and the speed at which this happens, may slightly vary from one country to another; but the general trend, the shape of the curve and its direction, are universal. In this universal context I cannot observe any significant implications for societies. It is just the nature of society. On the other hand, in a comparative analysis historical change might have a visible effect on the details of the curve's progression, which may indicate that the ability of some historical moments to affect one country but not another may have to due with a prolonged or abridged size of the respective age-group's share of the total population.[683] Much, of course, depends on whether there are available population statistics over the desired period that are comparable with each other. I was lucky that Ireland and Finland had a similar ten-year census interval, even if the census points differed by five years. That being the case, mnemohistorical surveys may only indicate historical deviations, but it requires other detailed studies to provide a confirmation and explanation of those deviations.

Indeed, upon close consideration, I would claim that the mnemohistorical approach should form an essential contextual background to any assessment of how an event's cultural legacy manifests in subsequent historical circumstances, especially when the timespan includes more than just one generation and the scale of the study is broader than a biography. It forces us to reconsider the cultural driving forces - the role of and changes in language,

[683] For example, I have a suspicion that the larger proportional size of the famine cohort at the age of 75 in Ireland (2,8%) versus that in Finland (1,99%) can be partially related to the mass emigration that diminished the total population of Ireland, whereas in Finland emigration had less of an impact on the total population.

religion, communication, and narration in transplanting ideas - that eventually shape historical change.

The aim of scientific research is not only to provide answers; it is also to present new problems. Above I have outlined what kind of new research questions each article has given rise to, for the most part pointing to gaps in the research for a specific country. In order to provide and answer for research question III) I will list some of the new research questions arising from this:

- To what extent is the feminization of famine or nationalism interlinked with a colonial or post-colonial discourse, and an asymmetrical power relation? When did famines start to be represented in a feminized manner in Finland? And to what extent does it matter that it is the 'other's' famines that are represented thus, and not 'ours'?
- More microstudies of food markets and availability during the Finnish famine, with a transnational outreach, are needed: where, when, and who had access to food, and for how long did it last?
- Why did some potato-dependent Irish localities suffer less than their potato-dependent neighbours? Did some communities have an advantage in possessing better credit rates, better access to imports, better transnational networks and contacts, relief works, social hierarchies, local wealth? Who imported, how much, and to where, and what effect did it have locally?
- What were the most important history textbooks in Finland's folk schools from 1940 to 1970? In primary schools after this? How was the famine portrayed in those textbooks? What were the most important textbooks in secondary education from 1870 to 2019? How was famine portrayed in those, and did it differ from the educational material reserved for the lower levels?
- What kind of place does the 1860s famine occupy in the mnemohistory of Finland's Swedish-speaking communities, and how did it differ from that of the Finnish-speaking communities? How did the famine affect them? How was it later represented?
- When did Catholic Ireland become nationalistic, and which were the influencing institutions and who were the agents of this transformation?
- What were the most important history textbooks in the Irish Free State, and how did they incorporate the Famine? What were the most important history textbooks in the Republic of Ireland, and how did they incorporate the Famine? How can the same questions be addressed to Northern Ireland, from 1923 to 2019? How did the narratives accommodate or react to historical changes during this period, and were there differences in this between the North and South?

Famines are momentous events, but they are also a collection of events. As life is sequenced one event after another, both for individuals as well as for societies - although societies have multiple events occurring simultaneously -

it is not always easy to tell where one event begins and another one ends. A social crisis multiplies these individually experienced events. The problem with famine is that while it is a crisis that has social dimensions, the experience of scarcity, fear, sickness, hunger, death, shame, dislocation, survival, and trauma are only felt and suffered individually, yet these symptoms reverberate socially. And these different individual experiences and memories form a challenge to its representation as a collective experience.

In general, people do not want to remember or to be reminded of a time when they failed in their social obligation to behave decently towards others. However, acknowledging this sense of shame should not be confused with trauma. The ability to redirect one's focus to present and future needs is more a symptom of resilience than psychopathological trauma. Nonetheless, that is probably the main reason why it takes such a long time - often generations - until famines can, but not necessarily do, become publicly acknowledged important events. Because why would anyone want to remember a famine?

A generational perspective does not imply that different generations would have experienced and remembered the event in the same way. Concerning famine generations, due to their socially fragmented nature it is even unlikely that they did, especially if one would compare them with war generations. However, what the generations did perhaps share was a social sensitivity to social and public discourse; in other words, they knew what kind of topics were socially preferable and what were less preferable among their peers, and recollecting the famine may have been one such issue. In order to preserve social relations, it is wise to know what kind of topics are socially desirable and acceptable, or unwanted. However, different generations may not necessarily share that same social code. The younger generation asks unsolicited questions; some may be appreciated, or some may unwanted, but either way the result is the same: public representations of famine ensue, and some may feel relieved by it, while others are highly disturbed by it. Debates on the honesty of famine representations occur and, in this debate, remembering and memory become rhetorical weapons.

Only a narrative that can provide some sense of absolution, some sense of shared victimhood, some deflection of culpability can remove the stain and the pain of shame. These narratives can include nature's eternal damnation upon the soil, oppressive occupiers, an invasion of alien beggars, the lazy and stupid commoners, and so on. Such famine tropes seem to have been utilized in Ireland and Finland, and they were applied immediately during the event. However, the broader public success and wider acceptance of such narratives is questionable, and can only be confirmed in a more narrow context.

For a narrative with these requirements to gain public acceptance, it requires the existence of an audience that is less convinced of its own personally remembered experience as the only true recollection of the event, and who therefore needs mediated representations, while the famine generation in general does not want their personal memories questioned. Although whether the younger generations are interested in or forthcoming

towards these narratives is determined by context, not only national contexts but especially micro-contexts on the local and family levels. Yet, the passage of time also seems to have been a partial factor. Popular support for the most radical types of narratives must wait until a significant proportion of the famine generation is reduced, or has lost their prestigious social positions. This assessment, too, is determined by context, as only context will clarify what is *considered* to be radical in any given time and space. Nevertheless, the narratives are aimed at those generations who are too young to remember the event, but are circumscribed by the powerful, though diminishing, influence of those who can remember. In other words, the narration of famine is inescapably aimed towards shaping identities based on memory turned into history. It is driven by certain carrier groups, but the target group is the younger generations, who lack their own direct memories.

This is the merit of the concept of mnemohistory. It allows us to explore this tension inherent in famines, as well as the dynamics between memory and history, with a pertinent focus on agency; i.e. whose memory, who historicizes, and for what purpose? One can justifiably doubt the representativeness of this study, as it utilizes two exceptionally well-known and studied famines. What can the mnemohistory of these cases tell us about much lesser known famines? Well, it cannot produce knowledge beyond the scope that it has set out to investigate, i.e. in this study Finland and Ireland. That is certain. However, it can provide an epistemological and methodological inspiration for how to conduct mnemohistorical studies on other cases, and how to find new problems within those cases.

In conclusion, I would suggest that scholars explore some of the more recent famines that are still within their periods of mnemohistory, and examine in what ways they correlate or diverge from the mnemohistorical pattern that I have outlined here concerning these two major nineteenth century European famines. Interesting times lay ahead.

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